

Charles Thomas

WILSON'S TALES OF THE
BORDERS, AND OF
SCOTLAND. HISTORICAL,
TRADITIONARY, AND IMAGIN-
ATIVE.

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REVISED BY ALEXANDER LEIGHTON, ONE OF
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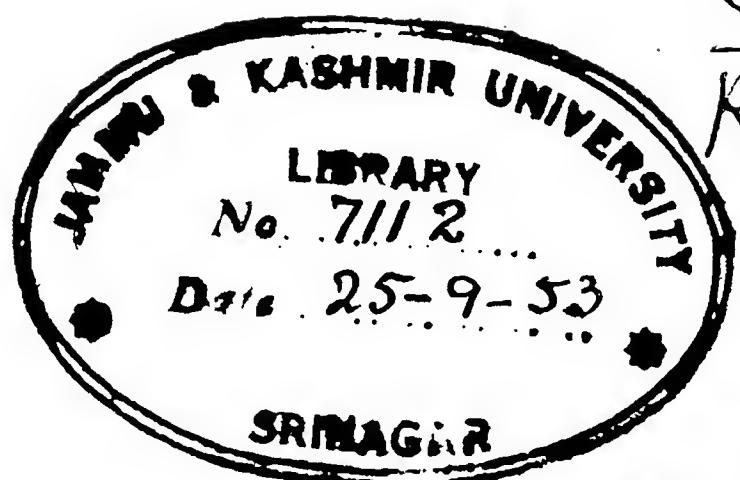
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Cawell
WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS, AND OF SCOTLAND.

BILL STANLEY; OR, A SAILOR'S STORY.

READER, if thou hast never visited the Fern Isles, but intendest to visit them, thou hast a pleasure in reserve—a positive, downright, profitable pleasure—profitable as regards the health of the body, for a trip upon the sea makes the blood feel ten years younger, and dance in the veins as merrily as the waves around us; and profitable also to the mind, by filling it with fresh objects for wonder and contemplation; and it is a fact very generally overlooked, that the poor jaded mind stands as much in need of new objects to work upon, as its plebeian neighbour, the body, stands in need of rest or change of diet. It is a matter of small consequence, whether you go in a yacht or in a steamer; in the former you will have as much pleasure, in the latter more punctuality. But it is a matter of much consequence what sort of company you have on board—in a word, what materials your fellow-voyagers are made of. If they be all your exceedingly good-natured sort of people—people bowed down with politeness and a desire to please—you won't be half an hour at sea till you find them dead as uncorked small beer that has stood an hour in the sun, or insipid as milk and water. I had as lief dine upon dried veal as be mewed up a day with such society. If

you wish to relish the company, and to see character developed, be careful to have it sprinkled with the salt, the pepper, and the mustard of human dispositions ; as for the vinegar, even a drop of that would be too much. Sickness might improve your health for the future, but would impair your pleasure for the present ; and, in truth, seasickness appears to be as pale, ghostly, and uncomfortable a companion as a man may meet withal. But, if the day be fine, and the breeze moderate, there is but little chance of your being sick. At any rate, you will find about half a pound of well-boiled ham, just as the vessel kisses the salt water, an excellent preventive ; and half the pleasure of a sea trip lies in the relish, the *salt*, which it gives to the homeliest morsel.

When the Ferns are first seen, what appeared but two, or, at most, three islands, are now found to be a cluster of sixteen or twenty—the ocean-homes of ten thousand times ten thousand sea-fowls ; which now may be seen rising in myriads, blackening the air and covering the surface of the islands, as if a thunder-cloud hung over them—anon their snowy wings flash in the sunbeams, countless specks of light begem the seeming cloud, and flickering for a moment, assume the appearance of a magnificent rainbow instinct with motion,—and, again, as if turning from the flashing of their own beautiful plumage, settle like darkness on the rocks. To appreciate the striking effect of these islands, it is necessary to sail round them, as well as to land upon them. Each appears to be surrounded by a pier or bulwark of nature's masonry. What is termed the Pinnacle Island, is the most impressive. We have been informed that it bears a strong resemblance to St. Helena—the grave of Europe's conqueror. The pinnacles are a mass of perpendicular rocks, representing towers, battlements, and fortifications, apparently as perfect to the eye as if formed by the hands of man, but that their terrible

strength seems to frown in mockery on his puny efforts. They, alone, are worth visiting again and again. They make man feel his own insignificance, and the power of the Omnipotent voice that called into existence the mighty ocean and the wonders of its bosom. Burns, on visiting a place in the Highlands, said it was “enough to make a blockhead a poet;” and we say that the man who could visit the Fern Isles without feeling the influence of poetry within him, has a head as stupid as the sea-fowl that inhabit them, and an imagination as impenetrable as the rocks that compose the pinnacles.

About three years ago, a mixed party left Newcastle, in a steamer, on a pleasure excursion to the islands. Amongst the company, there was a man of a weather-beaten but happy and intelligent countenance, whose age seemed to be at least sixty, and whose general appearance and manners indicated that he was an old seaman, and perhaps had been a purser or a sailing-master in the navy, or the commander of a merchantman, who had made enough to enable him to cast anchor ashore, in peace, quiet, and plenty, for the remainder of his days. His shrewdness, his knowledge, and his humour, soon rendered him a favourite with the company.

On arriving at the islands, the party went on shore; and, dividing themselves into groups, sat down, and spread out their provisions on the rocks; about a dozen prevailed upon the old sailor to accompany them, and to be their messmate. After dinner, they began to sing, and the old tar was called upon for a song.

“Gentlemen,” said he, “I never could raise a single stave in my life; but, if it's all one to you, I will spin you a sailor's yarn.”

“Agreed,” cried they—all! all!”

“Well,” began the old seaman, “it was a year or two before the short peace of Amiens, that two young seamen

were sitting in a public-house in North Shields, which I shall please to speak of as the sign of the Old Ship ; and its landlord I shall call Mr. Danvers. The name of the one sailor was William Stanley, the other Jack Jenkins. Jack was but a plain fellow, though no lubber ; but Bill was a glorious young fellow—the admiration of everybody; though only the son of a poor laundress, who wrought hard to bring him up, while a boy, he had contrived to get knowledge and book-learning enough to have been made commodore of a college. I may here tell you, too, that old Danvers had a daughter called Mary—one of the best and prettiest girls on all Tyneside. She was Bill's consort on all occasions ; and they were true to each other as a needle is to the Pole. Jack and he were friends and shipmates ; and being sitting together—

“ ‘I say Bill,’ said his comrade, ‘as we are to sail upon a long voyage to-morrow, what say you for a run up to Newcastle to the theatre to-night ? You shall take Polly Danvers, and I shall take my old woman.’ ” For Jack was married.

“ ‘It is of no use thinking of it,’ answered he ; ‘I am brought up here as though it were my last mooring.’

“ ‘Whew ! whew !’ whistled the other—‘with pretty Polly for a chain cable. But I don’t ask you to part company with each other. So let us make ready and start.’

“ ‘No,’ added Stanley ; ‘the best play and the best actors in the world, would be to me to-night like a land-lubber sitting smiling and piping upon a flute on the sea-banks, while I was being dashed to pieces by the breakers under his feet.

“ ‘What are you drifting at, Bill ?’ said Jenkins ; ‘your upper works seem to have hoisted a moon-raker.’

“ ‘I am unhappy, Jack,’ said he, earnestly, ‘and the cause presses like lead upon my heart. It throbs like fire within my forehead. For more than twenty years I have

been tossed about as a helmless vessel, without compass or reckoning. It is hard, Jack, that I can't mention my mother's name, but the blush upon my cheek must dry up the tear that falls for her memory. Three months ago, as you know, I came home, with the earnings of a two years' voyage in my pocket, and I found—O shipmate! when I expected to have flung my savings into my mother's lap, I found her dying in a miserable garret, with scarce a blanket to cover her! She had been long ill; and the rich old rascal called Wates, (who came to this part of the country some years ago, seized all but the straw on which she lay, for his rent. I thought my heart had burst as I flung myself upon the ground by her side. A mist came over my eyes. I neither knew what I saw nor heard. I felt her cold arms clinging round my neck. She spoke—she told me *my father's name!* Comrade! it was the first time I had heard it! The word father pierced my heart like a dagger, and, in my agony, I knew not what she said. I started, I entreated her to repeat it again! But my mother was silent!—she was dead! —the arms of a corpse were fastened round my neck! With the breath which uttered the name she had not spoken for more than twenty years, her spirit fled—and I—I cannot remember it.'

" 'Vast there, Bill!' cried Jack, wiping a tear from his eyes; 'that is tragedy enough without going to the play for it. But, for the sake of Mary Danvers, the prettiest girl on Tyneside (not even excepting my old woman), cheer up, my lad!'

" 'If that should cheer me,' said he, 'I believe it is the principal cause why I am sad to-day.'

" 'Why, then,' said Jack, 'don't you take an example by me, and run your frigate to church at once? You will find a plain gold ring is a precious fast anchor.'

" 'But what,' replied Stanley, 'if the old commodore, her father, won't allow me to take her in tow?'

“‘ He won’t !’ cried Jenkins—that’s a goodun ! Old dad Danvers won’t allow you to splice with her ! What’s his reason ? I’m sure he can’t say but you are as sober as the chief judge of the Admiralty.

“‘ To-night,’ replied Stanley, in a tone of agitation, ‘ he found her in my company, and called, or rather dragged her away : and, as they went, I heard him upbraid her bitterly, and ask if the meanness of her spirit would permit her to throw herself away upon—upon’—William became more agitated, the words he had to utter seemed to stick in his throat ; and his friend Jenkins exclaimed—‘ Upon a better man than ever he was in his life ! But what did he say, Bill—*upon* what was she going to throw herself away ?’

“‘ Upon a beggar’s nameless *bastard* ! he said,’ groaned poor Stanley, striking his hand upon his brow.

“‘ What d’ye say ?’ cried Jenkins, clenching his fist ; ‘ had the old fellow’s ribs not been removed off the first letter, this hand had shivered them ! Flesh and blood, Stanley, how did ye endure it ?’

“‘ I started to my feet,’ said he ; ‘ my teeth grated together ; but I heard her gentle voice reproving him for the word, and it fell upon my heart like the moon upon the sea, Jack, after a storm. My hand fell by my side. He is *her* father, thought I ; and, for the first time in his life, Will Stanley brooked an affront.’

“Just as he was speaking, a gentle tap came to the door. ‘ Good night, Jack,’ added he ; ‘ I understand the signal, the old cruiser is off the coast, and now for the smuggling trade.’

“I may tell you that the reason why old Danvers was so averse to his daughter keeping company with Bill Stanley was, that there was a hypocritical middle-aged villain, called Squire Wates (the same that Bill spoke of as having sold off his mother, and left her to die upon straw), I hate the

very name of the old rascal! Well, you see, this same Squire Wates that I am telling you of, came from abroad somewhere, and bought a vast deal of property about Shields. He was said to be as rich as an Exchange Jew—and perhaps he was. He had cast an eye upon Mary Danvers, and the grey-haired rascal sought, through the agency of his paltry yellow dross, to accomplish the destruction of the innocent and beautiful creature; and thinking that Will Stanley was an obstacle to the accomplishment of his purpose, he determined to have him removed. He also persuaded old Danvers that he wished to make his daughter his wife. Conscience!—after half drowning such a hoary-headed knave, I would have hung him up at a yard-arm, without judge or jury, and buried him in a dunghill without benefit of clergy. He employed a fellow of the name of Villars as a confederate in his base intentions—one who had been thrice a bankrupt, without being able to show a loss that he had sustained, or pay a shilling to his creditors. This creature he professed to set up in business—in something connected with the West India trade—and he prevailed on landlord Danvers to embark in the speculation, and to risk all that he had saved in the *Old Ship* for five-and-twenty years. So that the firm—if such a disgraceful transaction might be called by that appellation—went by the designation of *Villars & Danvers*. The firm, however, was altogether an invention of Wates, to promote his designs. There was another whom they engaged in their scheme—a fellow who was a disgrace to the sea—the very spawn of salt water—a Boatswain Rigby; and the frigate to which he belonged was cruising upon the coast for the protection of the coasters. But you will hear more about these worthies by-and-by.

"It was within a few hours of the time, when, as I told you before, Bill Stanley and Jack Jenkins were to sail upon a twelvemonth's voyage. The vessel to which they

belonged was lying out in the harbour below Tynemouth Castle, and sweethearts and wives were accompanying the crew to the beach, where a boat was waiting to take them aboard.

“Mary had ventured to accompany William part of the way towards the beach to bid him adieu ; and when, through fear of her father finding them together, she would have returned, he held her hand more firmly within his, and said—‘Fear nothing, love ; it is the last time we shall see each other for twelve months. Come down as far as the boat ; and do not let it be said, when it pulls off, that Bill Stanley was the only soul in the ship’s crew, that had not a living creature on the shore to wave *good-by* to—or one to drop a tear for his departure, more than if he were a dog. If I be alone and an outcast in the world, do not let me feel it now.’

“‘Willingly,’ she replied, ‘would I follow you, not only there, but to the ends of the earth. But my father will be on the beach, watching the boat; or, if he be not, the spies of another will be there, and my accompanying you would only make my persecution the greater during your absence.’

“‘What !’ exclaimed he, ‘have I then a rival for your affections, one that I know not of, and whose addresses are backed by your father’s influence ? Who is he?—or what is his name ? Tell me, Mary—I conjure you, by your plighted faith.’

“‘Give not the name of a rival,’ said she, ‘to a hypocritical wretch, whose heart I would not tread beneath my heel, for fear of pollution ! A rival !—William, I would not insult the meanest reptile that feeds upon garbage, by placing it in competition with a hypocrite so base and mean ! A rival !—rather would I breathe the vapours of a ploughed charnel-house for ever, than be blasted with his breath for a single hour ! No—my heart is yours—it is wholly yours—fear not.’

" 'Mary,' said he, solemnly, 'if I am worthy of your love, I am not unworthy of your confidence. You would not, you could not, bestow such language on the most worthless, where personal indignity had not been offered, or intended you. Name him, I adjure—nay, I *command* you,' he added wildly; 'it will yet be three hours till the vessel sail, and in that period I will avenge the indignity that has been offered to you.'

" 'Speak not of such a thing,' said she; 'whatever be his designs, against such a persecutor she is a weak woman who cannot defend herself. Would you raise your hand against a worm, or draw a sword against a venomous fly? Come, think not of it—look not so; would a vessel of the line throw a broadside into 'a paltry cock-boat? Punish him!—no, despise him!'

" 'It may be so,' he rejoined; 'but my heart is to yours as the eyelid is to the eyeball, and even a moth between them causes agony. Name him, that I may judge of his power to do evil, or the vessel which is this day to sail—sails without me.'

" 'Then, that your contempt may equal mine,' added she, 'think of the creature *Wates!* He whose name stands first on the list of *published* charities—and who sends the newsman abroad to trumpet his piety, while villany lurks in his grey hairs.'

" 'What!' he exclaimed wildly—*Wates!* the murderer of my mother!—who sent his minions to sell the very bed from beneath her, and left her to perish on the ground! Justice! where sleep thy thunderbolts! Mary, we shall return—I go not to sea to-day!'

" 'William,' said she affectionately, 'do you then fear to trust me? Did he carry honours in his right hand, and in his left the wealth of the world, and lay them both at my feet—I feel that within me that would spurn them from me, as I would an insect that crawled upon me to sting me.'

To you would I give my hand and beg for a subsistence, rather than share with him the throne of an empire. What then do you fear? In your own words, if I am unworthy of your confidence, I am unworthy of your love.'

"'No, Mary!' he cried, 'it is not fear. Wrong not yourself, neither wrong my bosom, that is full to bursting, by harbouring such a thought. When darkness issues from the sunbeams, I will doubt your affection; when a whirlwind sweeps across the sea, and the billows rise not at its voice, I will fear your truth—not till then. But I know that to associate the name of the most virtuous woman with that of a villain, is to make the world suspect her. Ah, Mary! in the innocence of your own heart you suspect not the iniquity of which some are capable. Let the name of a libertine be attached to the character of a man, and especially of a rich man, till his crimes are heaped up like a world of sin upon the shoulders of their contemptible author, and the next sun that rises, in the eyes of the world melts away their enormity, if not their remembrance; but, if the mere shadow of such a villain's breath pass over the character of a woman, its stains will remain fixed and immovable, growing in blackness and gathering misery, until life and memory have made their last port. I will not speak of revenge, to distress you—but I shall not undertake this voyage. I will remain on shore, not to guard your innocence, but to protect your name from slander.'

"'William,' she answered, 'ignorant of the world I may be; but I know that your remaining on shore would only give rise to the calumnies which you would wish to prevent. You would make yourself an object for the laughter and remarks of your shipmates; and would disoblige your owners, who, after this voyage, have promised you the command of a vessel. And for what would you do this, but through fear of a wretch on whom I could not waste

a single thought, and on whom I regret that I have thrown away a single word.'

"At that moment Jack Jenkins, with his wife Betty, weeping like a mermaid under his arm, hove in sight, and the moment he beheld his comrade, he called out—'Hollo, Bill! how did you and Polly manage to pass the old Commodore of *the Ship*; I saw him keeping a look-out abaft there.' But his wife sobbed while he was speaking, and, as he approached his shipmate, he continued—'Take aback in time, Bill, and don't marry—I ask your pardon, Polly, and yours too, Betty, my love,' kissing his wife's cheeks; 'I don't exactly mean not to marry, either—but this parting company breaks up one's heart, like an old fir-built craft that is not fit for fire-wood. I wish the lubber's back had a round dozen that invented the word—*good-by!* It always sticks in my throat, like pushing a piece of old junk down it.'

"While he was speaking, a king's cutter shot round a point of land, with a pack of lobsters abaft; and the black fellow, Boatswain Rigby, sat in her bow. She was within twenty yards of where they stood.

"'Fly, William!—fly!' said Mary, wildly; 'it is you they seek—my heart tells me it is you—oh, fly!'

"'Be not afraid, dearest,' said Stanley; 'I do not think they mean harm to us, and, if they did, flight is impossible.'

"'Oh, run! run!' cried Betty Jenkins; 'see—the marines are handling their muskets.'

"'Run! why, it's of no use running,' said her husband; 'the lobsters would bring a fellow up with their pepper-boxes before he could run a quarter of a cable's length.'

"The boat took the ground, and Rigby, with a party of sailors and marines, sprang on shore.

"'Well, my hearties,' said the boatswain, 'will either of you volunteer to serve his Majesty?'

"'Whv. sir'—Jack Jenkins was replying, when his

wife placed her hand upon his mouth, saying—‘Are you a fool, Jack?’

“‘What!’ said the boatswain, ‘no volunteers! Well, we want but one of you. This is our man,’ and he touched Stanley on the shoulder with his cutlass.

“‘Oh!’ cried Mary, addressing the boatswain, as she fell upon William’s neck; ‘spare him! spare him! and with my last coin I will endeavour to procure a substitute in his stead.’

“‘It won’t do, my pretty maiden,’ said Rigby; ‘in these times we can’t lose so promising a prize, for a woman’s tears. Marines, to the boat with him.’

“‘Hold! servile slaves!’ cried Stanley, as they attempted to drag him away; ‘allow me to bid adieu to my Mary, and to my friends here, or I defy the worst you can do.’

“‘Quick, then,’ said Rigby, ‘the service cannot wait for farewells.’

“Mary still clung to William’s arm. ‘Good-by, Jack,’ said he, with the salt water rolling in his eyes, and his heart ready to burst—‘and when you return from the voyage, see that you keep the land-sharks off my poor Mary, for the sake of your old messmate.’

“‘Belay, Bill!’ cried Jenkins; ‘my heart’s afloat. Heaven bless you, lad, and be at ease respecting Polly. Should any lubber pull alongside, my name’s not Jenkins if I don’t force him to strike his colours, and shove off with broken timbers. Good-by, Bill—give me your hand; and though they were my last words, I say—I’m blowed if ever I shook the flipper of a better fellow!’

“‘Mary!’ sobbed he, pressing her to his heart; ‘farewell, love!—we shall meet again!—you won’t forget Bill Stanley!’

“‘Stay! oh, stay!’ she exclaimed. But the boatswain waved his hand impatiently, and his crew rudely tearing

them asunder, William Stanley was dragged to the boat, and borne on board the frigate.

"Well, twelve months passed, after the impressment of William Stanley, and Squire Wates found that his wealth offered no temptation to Mary Danvers, to enable him to effect her ruin. He, however, had inveigled her father into his meshes; and, through the pretended failure of the mercantile speculation in which Villars and old Danvers had been engaged, the former brought a claim of five hundred pounds against the latter, who had lost his all. And the plan of the villains was, that Villars should cast the old man into prison, and that Wates should come forward, and professing to pay the debt, set the father at liberty, and obtain, through the daughter's gratitude, what her virtue spurned. To ensure success to this master-stroke of their wickedness, it was to be attended by a mock-marriage, in which Boatswain Rigby (the frigate to which he belonged being again lying off Tynemouth), was, for a *consideration*, to officiate as chaplain.

"It was on the very day that this piece of iniquity was hatched, that Jack Jenkins, having returned—and having learned from his wife, and from Mary Danvers, of some of the attempts that had been made by Squire Wates, during his absence, and since the impressment of his comrade—hurried to the house of the old rascal, with a rope's end in his hand. He found the street door open, and, without knocking, he went to the foot of the stairs, and demanded to see Squire Wates.

"'You can't see him, fellow,' said a portly, pampered man-servant.

"'Can't see him!' roared Jack; 'he shall see me presently, and feel me too. So, come along, Mr. Powdered-pate; shew me where he is, or I'll capsize you head and heels.'

"The old villain, himself, hearing the uproar, came blustering out of a room, crying—'Who are you, fellow?

and how dare you, in such a manner, break into my house? What is your business with me?’

“‘Vast there with your questions, old leprous-livered knave!’ vociferated Jenkins. ‘As to who I am, I am a better fellow than ever stood in your shoes; and, as to daring to break into your house, before I leave it, I shall dare to break your head! And as to my business with you I intend to make you *sensible* of that too;’ and as he uttered the word *sensible*, he shook the piece of rope in his hand and continued—‘Now, I have answered your questions answer one to me. Do you remember a lad of the name of Bill Stanley—eh?’

“The Squire shook with terror; but endeavouring to assume an air of authority, stammered out—‘No—no—fellow; I—I know no such person. Begone, sir. Be—begone, I say.’

“‘Smash me if I do!’ added Jenkins. ‘And belike you don’t know Polly Danvers, either? Well, perhaps this piece of old junk may sharpen your memory!’

“Wates called upon his servants for assistance.

“‘Hands off, ye beggarly swabs! or kiss the boatswain’s sister!’ continued the sailor, laying lustily around him, and causing the domestics to shrink back. ‘Vast there!’ he continued, laying hold of the squire, who attempted to escape; ‘not so fast—I ain’t quite done with you yet. Now, you see, I’m an old friend and shipmate of Bill Stanley’s; and the day that he was pressed, and you were the cause of it, Bill says to me—‘Jack,’ says he, ‘when I am away, see that no land-shark comes alongside my Polly.’ ‘Fear nothing, Bill,’ says I, ‘hang me if I don’t—there’s my hand on’t.’ Now, I’ve been at sea ever since, until the other day, and my old woman tells me that you, you cream-faced scoundrel, not only had the impudence to pull alongside Polly Danvers, but had the audacity to propose—shiver me if I can name it—but take that!’

"And so saying, he began to lay the rope fiercely round the shoulders of his victim; and, as the servants again closed upon the sailor to rescue their master, he dashed them to the ground, to the right and to the left, and finally rushed out of the house, crying—'Who shall say that Jack is the lad that would break his promise?'

"I told you it was a part of the plot of Wates, that his confederate Villars, was to cast old Danvers into prison, on account of the pretended debt. The old landlord was sitting in the parlour of the *Old Ship*, trembling at the horrors of a jail, and fearing every moment the entrance of a sheriff's officer to arrest him, while his wife and daughter endeavoured to comfort him, and he said mournfully—'Wife, after being married thirty years as we have been, I did not expect that we should have been parted in this way. I did not think that, after toiling in the *Old Ship* here for twenty years, to save a matter of money for our daughter, I should lose all, and my hair grew white in a prison. But it is of no use mourning about it; for I question if those for whom we wished the money would have thanked us. I know I would not have seen a father or mother of mine dragged to jail like a common thief, if I by any means could have prevented it.' And, as he spoke, he cast a look of sorrow and upbraiding upon Mary, who wept on her mother's shoulder.

"'Don't be cruel, husband,' said his wife; 'how can you distress our daughter? I am sure she can't help the state we are reduced to, any more than I can. But I always said what all your jobbing and trafficking in company with the bankrupt Villars, would end in. I know thou'rt suffering enough, and we are all suffering; but don't be reflecting upon our dear Mary, for a better child never parents had.'

"'I an't making reflections,' replied he, peevishly; 'only I'm saying, I would not have stood so by my father. It is

no reflection to say that Mary might have been a lady, and then I am sure I should not have been dragged from the parlour—where I have sat for twenty years—to a dungeon in a jail.'

"‘Father!’ said Mary, ‘what would you have me do? Would you have me become an object for the virtuous to shun, for your enemies to triumph over and despise, and for the abandoned to insult? Would you have me to sell my purity, my peace of mind, my present and eternal happiness, to a miscreant who carries sanctity on his brow, and morality between his teeth, while his heart is a putrid sepulchre? Would you have me do this to save you from a prison?—and to which you have been brought by your own simplicity. To assist you, I will become the servant of servants—I would brush the dust from the shoes of strangers, in this house where I was born. But, while the tear blanches my cheeks for your misfortunes, cause them not to burn with shame.’

"‘Why, daughter,’ replied he, angrily, ‘I don’t understand thy high words at all. But though I don’t know so much of my dictionary as thou dost, I know those books you read have turned thy head with foolish and high notions. I know you wont have Mr. Wates, because he is a thought oldish, and belike doesn’t make love like one of the romance sparks you read about. But, I say, I’m neither blind nor deaf, and, for all that you have said, I know as how it is marriage, and nought else, that Mr. Wates intends. But, rich as he is, you won’t have him, but will see your poor old father dragged through the streets, like a thief to a prison. O Mary! it is a sore thing to have an ungrateful child!’

"‘O husband!—husband!’ said Mrs. Danvers; ‘they were thy high notions, and none of our dear daughter’s, that has brought us to this. But it is not my part to add to thy sorrows, when thou art about to be torn from mv

side. Alack! I never thought to be made a widow in this sort.'

" 'Wife!—wife!' cried he impatiently; 'be it my blame, or whose blame it may, we can't make a better of it now; but it is very hard to have lost the earnings of twenty years, and to be parted from wife and child. Don't be angry with me, daughter. Your father meant all he has said or done for your good. Come, give your old father a kiss and forgive him. It may be the last he will ever receive from you in his own house.'

" She threw her arms around his neck and wept; and while the father and daughter embraced each other, a sheriff's officer entered the house.

" 'Well-a-day!—well-a-day!' cried Mrs. Danvers, as she perceived him; 'thy errand, and the disgrace of it, will break my heart.'

" 'Don't be distressed, good woman,' said the officer, 'it is no such disgrace but that many of the best in the country must submit to it every day. Mr. Danvers,' added he, 'I am sorry to inform you, you must walk with me. This paper will inform you, you are my prisoner.'

" 'It is very hard,' said the old man; 'I say, sir, it is very hard to be called a prisoner in a free country, for doing nothing at all. Heaven knows about this here debt that is brought against me, for I don't. But I know that locking me up in a jail won't pay it.'

" 'Oh, cruel law!' exclaimed Mary; 'framed by fools, and put in force by usurers. Let justice laugh at the wise law makers, who shut up the springs, and expect the reservoirs to be filled.'

" 'Why, miss,' said the official, 'I didn't make the law; I be only the officer of the law. So come along, Mr. Danvers, my good man, for I can't stop all day to hear your daughter's speeches. I have other jobs of the same sort in hand, and business must be attended to.'

" 'Go, unfeeling man,' answered Mary, 'we will go with you. Bear with misfortune, my dear father, like a man. I will accompany you—take my arm. If I have hung upon yours with pride, upon more joyful occasions, it shall not be said that I was ashamed for you to rest upon mine, when they led you through the streets to a prison.' And she accompanied him to the place of confinement.

" It was two days after old Danvers had been taken to prison, that the frigate into which William Stanley had been impressed made towards the land, and rode off the mouth of the Tyne, while a boat's crew were ordered on shore. Boatswain Rigby, apprehensive that William would request to be one of them, and that his request might be granted, had, previous to the boat leaving the vessel, sought to quarrel with him, and struck him; and requested of the lieutenant that, in consequence of the insolence he had used towards him, he should not be permitted to go on shore, but, as a punishment, placed on duty.

" Poor Stanley was walking the deck, saying unto himself—' Refused permission to go ashore! Yes, Rigby! petty tyrant as thou art, thou shalt rue it! Refused a privilege that would have caused a slave to rebel, had he been denied it. But the time will come, when we shall meet upon terms of equality; and were his cowardice equal to his brutality—yea, were he shielded by a breast-plate hard as his own heart—my revenge shall find a passage through both; and his blood shall wash out the impression and the shame of the blow with which to-day he dared to smite me as a dog. The remembrance of that blow sticks as a dagger in my throat—its remembrance chokes me!' And, hurried on by the agitation of his feelings, he spoke aloud as he continued. " Not only denied to set my foot upon the place of my nativity, but struck!—yes, struck like a hound, by a creature I despise! O memory!" he added, ' torture me not! Here, every remembered object strikes

painfully on my eyeballs! The church and the church-yard, where my mother's body now mingles with the dust, are now before me, and I am prohibited from shedding a tear upon her grave. The banks of the Tyne, where I wandered with my Mary, while it sighed affection by our side, and the blue sea, which lay behind us, raising a song of love, are now visible—but though they are still beautiful, they are as beautiful things that lived and were loved, but that are now dead !'

"In the intensity of his feelings he perceived not a boat which drew alongside ; and, while he yet stood in a reverie, his old crony, Jack Jenkins, sprang on board, and, assisted by a waterman, raised Mary Danvers to the deck.

"'Yonder he is,' exclaimed Jack, 'leaning over the gunwale, as melancholy as a merman making his last will and testament in the presence of his father Neptune.'

"Stanley started round at the voice of his friend ; he beheld his betrothed wife ; for you know they were the same as betrothed—they had vowed to be true to each other, and, I believe, broken a ring betwixt them.

"'My own Mary !' he cried, and sprang forward to meet her. The poor things fell upon each other's neck, and wept like children.

"'Shove me your fist, my hearty,' cried Jenkins, 'as soon as you have done there. I thought I would give you a bit of an agreeable surprise.'

"'There, Jack!—there, my honest old friend!' cried Bill, stretching out his one hand, and with the other supporting his sweetheart. 'My head and heart are scudding beneath a sudden tempest of joy ! Speak, Mary, love ! let me again hear your voice thrilling like music through my breast ! O Jack ! I am now like one who has been run down in a squall at midnight, and ere he is aware that the waters have covered over him, finds himself aloft, listening to the harps of the happy.'

" 'I don't know what this is like, Bill,' said the other; 'but it an't like those meetings we used to have.'

" 'Why so silent, love,' said William, addressing Mary; 'in another hour I shall be off duty, and in one day of happiness let us forget the past.'

" 'Dear William,' she replied, 'I know not what I should say, nor what I should conceal. I have so little of joy to communicate, that I would not embitter the pleasure of the present short hour, by a recital of the events that have occurred during your absence.'

" 'Hide nothing from me, Mary,' said he earnestly; 'but tell me, have my forebodings, regarding the monster Wates, been but too true? Or are your parents— You tremble love—you are pale! O Jenkins, speak!—tell me what is the meaning of this?'

" 'Drop it, Bill, my dear fellow,' said the other, 'drop it. You have got Polly alongside of you there, with a heart as sound and true to you as when you left her; and don't distress her with questions; she didn't come aboard for that. I served out the old fellow Wates, as you requested me, with a rope's end, t'other night, and that pretty smartly too. And, with regard to father Danvers, why, poor soul, somehow or other, misfortune has got the weather-gage of him, and the other day he was taken to jail. So, say no more about it, Bill—we can't mend it.'

" 'Why,' he exclaimed, stamping his foot as he spoke, 'why am I a slave? And who, my beloved Mary—who now shall protect you? But I can still do something. I have a bank bill for a hundred pounds, the savings of former voyages. I know not why I took it out of my locker this morning. I had it carefully placed away with the ringlet which I cut from your brow, dearest. Here are both; I will keep the ringlet, and think it dearer than ever; take you the note, my love; it may be of service to your father.'

" 'No, no, William,' she cried, 'I must not, I cannot! Dearest, most generous of men, do not *pity* me, or I shall wither in your sight. Look on me as you were wont. But, oh! let me not stand before you as a beggar. Keep it—as you love me, keep it—make me not ashamed to look in your face.'

" 'Then take it, Jack, take it,' said Stanley, handing him the note; 'do with it as I desire. Say nothing more now; for here comes our Boatswain Rigby, the curse of our ship's crew, and the disgrace of the service.'

" Mary shuddered as Rigby approached them; and boisterously said—' Who have you got there, fellow, and you upon duty? I shall report you instantly. Some of your old friends, and meditating an escape with them, I see.' And, turning to Jenkins, he added—' Who, sir, gave you permission to come on board this vessel, and to bring *a woman of that description* along with you? Off, instantly, or I shall detain you too. You, girl, must remain;' and he approached her familiarly to take her by the arm. Stanley sprang forward, exclaiming—' Hold, sir, hold! You have insulted her by your words; but touch not, as you would remain a living man, the hem of her garment.'

" 'Begone to your duty, presumptuous slave!' cried the boatswain fiercely; 'begone!' And as he spoke, he raised his hand, and struck him on the breast.

" 'Again!—ha!—ha!—ha!' exclaimed William, like a demon laughing through excess of torture; 'twice you have struck me, Rigby, to-day!—struck me in the presence of her who is dearer to me than life! Now, heaven have mercy on thee!' And, seizing the boatswain by the breast, he hurled him violently on the deck, and planted his foot upon his bosom.

" 'William!—dear William!' cried Mary; 'forbear!—forgive!'

“ ‘Bill, Bill, my dear fellow !’ cried Jack, ‘don’t lose your life for the sake of a ruffian.’

“ William continued standing with his foot upon his breast, laughing in the same wild and fearful manner, and shouting—‘struck me !’ while Rigby called for help. A number of the ship’s crew sprang forward to the rescue of the boatswain, who, rising, cried—‘The irons instantly ! Set a double watch over him ! He has attempted, as ye have witnessed, the life of an officer, and his first promotion shall be the yard-arm.’

“ While they were placing the irons upon him, Mary threw herself at Rigby’s feet, exclaiming—‘Oh, spare him ! —save the life of my William !—by her that bore you, or that loves you, save him !—save him !’

“ ‘Rise, Mary !’ cried William, ‘that our farewell glance be not one of reproach. Pray for vengeance on my enemy ! Farewell, Jack—for ever this time ! See my Mary safe !’ And, as they were bearing him away, he turned his head towards her, and cried—‘Dearest, we shall meet hereafter, where the villain and the tyrant cannot enter.’

“ She fell insensible on the deck, and, in a state of unconsciousness, was conveyed on shore by Jenkins.

“ The frigate was commanded by Captain Sherbourne, and, when the officers were assembled to hold a court-martial over poor Stanley, he said, addressing Rigby—‘ There is not a man in the British navy, Boatswain Rigby, more determined than myself to preserve order and discipline ; but while, as captain of this vessel, I am compelled to enforce the law, I am no advocate for the inhuman and degrading lash ; nor can I, with indifference, sentence a brave fellow to be hung up for doing that which the best feelings of his nature, and the sentiments that make a hero, prompted him to do. I sit here as a judge, and am neither advocate for the prisoner, nor your accuser ; but, if the law must be satisfied, the offence, wherever it is found,

shall be punished, whether in the accused or the accuser. For it has not escaped my observation, that no officer under me has ever found a fault in the prisoner, save yourself. Are you then resolved and prepared to prosecute your charge ?'

" 'I am both resolved and prepared, Captain Sherbourne,' said Rigby; 'and I demand the satisfaction of the laws of my country and the service, not only as an officer who has been insulted and injured, but as a British officer and subject, whose life has been attempted.'

" 'This is a serious charge, boatswain,' said Captain Sherbourne; 'let the prisoner be brought forward.'

" The culprit was brought up, guarded, and in fetters, and, being placed before his judges—'Prisoner,' began the captain, 'I deeply regret that one of your appearance, and of your uniform excellent conduct and courage, while under my command, should be brought before me under such circumstances as those in which you now stand; and I regret the more that, if the charges be proved, the proofs of your former character and courage, which are known to us, will be of no avail. You are charged not only with striking your commanding officer, which is in itself a heinous offence, but also with attempting his life. Do you plead guilty or not guilty ?'

" 'That,' replied the prisoner, 'is as your honours please to interpret the deed. But there is no such charge reckoned against me in the log-book aloft.'

" 'You then plead not guilty,' said the captain.

" 'I am guilty,' answered he, 'of having acted as it was the duty of a man to act. I am guilty of having convinced a villain, that a proud heart may be found beneath a plain blue jacket. I am guilty of having proved that there are souls and feelings before the mast, as high-minded and as keen as upon the quarter-deck. But 'the head and front of my offending hath this extent, no more.'

“‘He speaks bravely,’ muttered some of those who heard him; ‘the chaplain himself couldn’t have said it so well by half.’

“‘Boatswain,’ said the captain, in the hearing of the prisoner, ‘state the particulars of your charge against him.’

“‘While it was his turn on duty,’ said Rigby, ‘I found him neglecting it, and plotting his escape from the frigate, in conversation with a suspicious-looking man, and a girl of common fame’—

“‘Tis false!—despicable recreant!—tis false!’ interrupted William, wildly; ‘she is spotless as the fountains of light! Breathe again dishonour on her name, and these chains that bind me shall hurl you, with the falsehood blistering on your tongue, down to’—

“‘Silence, young man!’ interposed the captain, ‘I command you. If you have cause of complaint you will afterwards be heard. You may be mistaken, Mr. Rigby, regarding the character of the young woman, and you will not better your cause in our eyes, by unnecessarily blackening the prisoner’s.’

“‘Captain Sherbourne,’ inquired the boatswain, in an offended tone, ‘do you question my honour?’

“‘I permit no such interruptions, sir,’ said the captain; ‘we sit here to deal with facts, not with honour. Go on with your charge.’

“‘When,’ resumed Rigby. ‘I overheard him plotting his escape from the service, and commanded him to his duty, he haughtily rebelled; and, on my ordering the strangers on shore, he sprang forward, and dashing me on the deck, stamped his foot upon my breast, threatening and attempting to murder me, as these witnesses will prove.’

“‘Stand forward, my good fellows,’ said Captain Sherbourne, addressing two of the seamen, who had been witnesses of the assault, and assisted in rescuing the boatswain.

'Give your evidence truly. What do you know of this affair ?'

"'Why your honour,' said the first seaman, 'just that the boatswain was lying upon the deck, and that Bill there had his foot upon his breast.'

"Do you suppose," inquired the Captain, 'he had a design upon his life ?'

"Please your honour," answered the seaman, 'I can't say; but you had better ask himself. If he had, he won't deny it; for I'll take my Bible oath that Bill, poor fellow, never hove the hatchet in his life—and I don't believe he would do it to save his life. I could always be as sure of what he said, as I am of our latitude when your honour's own hands works it out.'

"'Well,' inquired the Captain, addressing the other seaman, 'what evidence have you to offer ?'

"'I don't know anything about evidence, your honours,' answered the seaman. 'The boatswain was lying on the deck, and poor Bill had his foot upon his breast sure enough, and was laughing in such a dismal way as made me think that he had gone maddish through ill-usage or something. For, poor fellow, he was never easily raised, and though brave as a lion, was harmless as a lamb—all the crew will swear that of him.'

"'Prisoner,' said the Captain, 'I am sorry that the evidence of these witnesses, who seem as sorry for your fate as I am, but too strongly confirm, at least a part of the charges against you. If you have anything to say in your defence, the court is inclined to hear you.'

"'I am neither insensible of, nor ungrateful for the kindness of my commander,' answered William; 'and for the sake of her and her only, of whom the boatswain dared to speak as one dishonoured, I do not hold life without its value. But I disdain to purchase it by the humiliation of vindicating myself farther from the accusations of a wretch

whom I despise. Let the law take its award. Death is preferable to being the servant of a slave.'

"'I know not,' whispered Captain Sherbourne to his first lieutenant, 'how my lips shall pronounce sentence of death on this brave young fellow. His heroic courage and his talents compel me to revere and love him—and there is something, I know not what, in his features, haunts me as a lost remembrance.' Then turning toward the prisoner, he added—'Before the sentence of the court is passed, whatever requests you may wish to have performed, I will see them faithfully carried into effect.'

"'Thanks! thanks!' replied William; 'I have but little to offer in return for your goodness; but the same spirit that made me resent the indignity of my accuser, would, were my hands free, cause me to embrace your knees. I have but three requests to make. I wish my watch to be given to her who is dearest to me on earth—Mary Danvers; my quadrant and other matters to my friend Jenkins, who sails in the ship '*Enterprise*,' now lying in the river; and my last request is, that, with the ten guineas belonging to me, and now in the possession of the purser, a stone may be placed upon my mother's grave—which Mary Danvers will point out—with these words chiseled upon it—

TO THE MEMORY
OF THE
AMIABLE AND UNFORTUNATE
MATILDA STANLEY.
BY DESIRE OF HER UNFORTUNATE SON.

"'Matilda Stanley!' exclaimed Captain Sherbourne in a tone of agitation, 'was that the name of your mother?'

"'It was, your honour, replied William, 'and there were few such mothers.'

"'And your father!—your father!' repeated the Captain, with increased agitation; 'what knew you of him?'

"‘Alas! nothing!’ exclaimed the prisoner bitterly, and the tears gushed down his cheeks; ‘but, oh, recal not to my memory in a moment like this—recal not my mother’s —No! no! my sainted mother!’

“‘O conscience! conscience!’ exclaimed the Captain, starting to his feet, and gasping in eagerness as he spoke. ‘One question more—and your mother’s father was a dissenting clergyman in the village of — name!—name the place! on that depends your life, and my happiness or misery.’

“‘In the village of — in Westmoreland,’ replied William; ‘but he survived not his daughter’s broken heart. You knew them, then? Oh, did you know my father?’

“‘My son! my son! come to a father’s heart,’ exclaimed the Captain, springing forward and falling on his neck; ‘*I am your father!* Shade of my wronged Matilda! look on this!’

“‘My father!’ exclaimed William, ‘have I found him! and in such an hour! But, if you loved my mother, wherefore’—

“Upbraid me not, my son,’ interrupted the Captain, ‘mingle not gall with my cup of joy. Your mother was my wife—my first, my only one. Circumstances forced me to exact a promise from her, that our marriage should be concealed until I dared to acknowledge it, and long captivity severed me from her; until, on my return, I could obtain no trace of either of you. How I have mourned for her, all who now stand beside me have been the daily witnesses. My son! my son!’

“‘My father! O my father!’ exclaimed William; ‘but at this moment you are also my *judge*.’

“‘No! no!’ cried the Captain. ‘Seamen, strike off the fetters from your commander’s son. Rigby, at another tribunal I will be surety for the appearance of my son.’

"The fetters were struck off from William's hands and feet, and officers and men burst simultaneously into three times three, loud, long, and hearty cheers.

"The boatswain, fearing that a worse thing might come upon him, fell on his knees before the Captain, and made a full confession of his shameful intrigue with Squire Wates, and begged forgiveness, as his kidnapping of William had been the means of finding the commander his son. The rascal was forgiven, but dismissed the frigate.

"But I must return to poor Mary. She was sitting beside her father in the prison, when he addressed her saying—'Come, come, child, thou saidst thou wouldst sing and read to me, and is this thy singing—nothing but sighing and tears. I'm saying, is this thy promised singing, daughter?—but it is perhaps the fittest singing for a jail.'

"'Ah, father!' said Mary, 'you know I would not willingly add to your sorrows. But can you forbid me to weep for him, who, from childhood, has been to me as a brother—whom I have long regarded as a husband, and who, *for my sake*, must in a few hours die as the vilest criminal.'

"'Why, I'm saying, daughter,' said old Danvers, 'let's have no more about it. I'm as sorry for Bill Stanley as thou canst be for thy life. But I say, girl, they can expect no better who fly in the face of a father. I am sure we have distress enough of our own, if we would only think about it, without meddling with that of other people. Is it not bad enough that thy father is shut up here within these iron bars, and perhaps thou and thy mother will be driven to beg upon the streets, when thou mightest have been riding in thy carriage. I'm saying, is not this misery enough, without thy crying about what thou hast nothing to do with. Why, Mary, thou mayest be thankful thou an't his wife.'

"'Father! father!' she said, wringing her hands together,

'murmur not at our lot, nor upbraid me with sympathising in misery to which yours is mercy! What are the sufferings of want compared with what I now feel! To save him I could smile and be happy, though doomed to beg and kiss the foot that spurned me from them.'

"The sheriff's officer and Mrs. Danvers at this moment entered, and the latter rushed towards her husband, exclaiming—'O husband! husband! the worst is come at last! They have seized house and all!—and, Mary, thou and I are left without a house to cover us! Thou hast no home now, hinny! Your father is shut up in this filthy prison, and your mother never knew what misery was till now!'

"'Wife! wife!' cried old Danvers, 'what dost thou say?—seized the house, too!—and my wife and daughter driven to the street! O wife!—I say, I wish I had never been born! Mary! Mary, love! what wilt thou do now?'

"'Do not, my dear parents,' said Mary, 'repine at the hand of providence. HE who clothes the lily, and feeds the fowls of the air, will not permit us to perish in the midst of Christians.'

"'Daughter! daughter!' cried her mother, 'thou little knowest what a hard-hearted and wicked world we live in! Humanity and honesty, and everything that is good, have gone out of it. The world was not so when I knew it first.'

"'Well! well!' cried old Danvers; 'if the world be as bad as you say it is, it is one comfort that I shall not be long in it; for I cannot live to know that my wife and child are beggars, and that I am a prisoner, starving in a jail.'

"At this moment, Wates entered the room, and addressing Mr. Danvers, said—'I have but this morning heard of your misfortunes, Mr. Danvers, and have not lost a moment in hastening to offer my assistance. To your daughter I now offer my *hand*, my fortune, and my heart; and let her

but say she will accept them, and this day ends your imprisonment.'

" 'There ! old woman !' exclaimed Mr. Danvers, in ecstasy, ' what dost thou and our daughter think of that ? Did I not say that Mr. Wates meant marriage, and nothing else but marriage—and was not I right ? Thou shalt have her, sir, with a father's blessing, and I will pray for thee the longest day I have to live. Fall on thy knees, mother Danvers—fall on thy knees, and thank the kind, good, generous gentleman. Daughter, why dost thou stand there and say nothing ? Did I not always say thou wast born to be a lady ?'

" 'For the sake of human nature, Mr. Wates,' said Mary, ' I will suppose that your intentions are now honourable. I will believe that you mean kindly, that you are willing to assist my parents, and rescue them from their distress. But, could I even forget the past—could I forget that for many months you have sought my destruction, and have striven to make me become that which would have made me to be despised in my own eyes, and an outcast in those of others—if, sir, I could even forget these things, I could not give my hand to one whom my heart has been accustomed to detest. For your offered kindness I would thank you with tears, but I can only repay you with gratitude. If, however, your assistance to my parents is only to be procured through my consenting to your wishes, they must remain as they now are, until it shall please providence to send them a more disinterested deliverer. Betwixt us there is a gulf fixed that shall ever divide us—it is death and aversion—therefore think not of me.'

" 'Daughter !' cried the old man wrathfully, ' hast thou taken leave of thy senses altogether ?'

" 'Come, Mary, love,' said her mother ; ' now that poor William must be no more, and that Mr. Wates means honourably, be not obstinate—do not suffer your father to

die in a place like this, and your mother to beg upon the streets.'

" 'Mother!' cried Mary, vehemently, 'with the last of my blood will I toil for your support; but speak not of that man to me. Keep, sir, your wealth for one to whom it may have attractions, and to whom you have never offered dishonour. I despise it, and I despise you; and this shallow and cruel artifice will avail you nothing.'

" 'Consent,' said Wates, 'and to-night our hands shall be united.'

" 'Wife! wife!' cried the old man, 'we will humble ourselves at her feet; belike she won't see her father and mother weeping, on their knees before her, and say to them—die!' And they knelt before her.

" 'Rise! my parents!—rise!' she exclaimed; 'if ye would not have your daughter's blood upon your head. Monster!' she added, turning to Wates, 'can ye talk of marriage to me, when he to whom my heart and vows are given, if he be not already dead, must in a few hours die a death of shame!'

" 'And will you not save him,' said Wates, eagerly.

" 'Save him!—how? how?' she cried.

" 'Consent to be mine, and within an hour I shall procure his pardon,' said he.

" 'Villain! villain! would you deceive me with the snare of the devil?' she exclaimed.

" 'I swear it,' he answered.

" 'Save him! save him!' she exclaimed wildly; but again cried suddenly—'No, no!—wretch, ye mock me!'

" 'Yes, he mocks you, Mary,' said Jack Jenkins, who had just entered. 'I could find in my heart to kick the old murderer through those iron gratings; for I know it is all through him that poor Bill must, before the sun go down, lose his life.'

'While Jack was speaking, the locks of the prison doors

were again heard creaking, and in rushed William, his father, and the officers of the frigate, and they dragged the rascal Rigby along with them.

"There was a cry of 'Mary!' 'William!' and a rush to meet each other. But the best scene was the confusion of Wates, when his brother knave exposed his villainy ; and Captain Sherbourne ordering them to begone, Jack Jenkins rushed after them, for the pleasure of kicking them down the prison stairs ; but Bill, catching him by the arm, said—'Messmate, let me introduce you to *my father!*'

"'Your father!' exclaimed Mary ; and it would have been hard to say which of the two was nearest fainting. They left the prison together, old Danvers and all ; and Mary and Bill were soon spliced. They were the happiest couple alive. He rose to be post captain ; and I hope to see him an admiral. So, gentlemen, that's an end to my yarn."

"But," inquired the company, "what became of Jack Jenkins?" "Why, I am Jack Jenkins," answered he ; "sailing-master, with half-pay of five and sixpence a-day, besides two shillings as interest for prize-money—thanks to my old friend Bill."

THE SURGEON'S TALES.

THE CONSCIENCE-STRICKEN.

AT a dark period of the world, not yet so far back, in point of time, as modern conceit would place it, many facts in philosophy constituted a mere page of fable in the estimation of those whose belief in witchcraft and other fanciful agencies was unbounded; but, in our enlightened times, things are so curiously reversed, that some of the real events of human life—the every-day workings of that wonderful organ, the human heart—are viewed sceptically, as delusion, deception, or invention, by those whose faith is pinned to the floating mantle of philosophy, though it cover the wildest theory that ever set fire to enthusiasm. The facts I have to relate in this chapter, though true, may, from their extraordinary nature, be apt to be classed among creations of the fancy; yet I would rather that their credibility were tested by the mind of the plain and argute man of the world, than by that of the philosopher, who with his head down in the well, kicks at inexplicable mysteries growing on its brink.

It is not my object to treat metaphysically any of those powers of the mind which, either in health or disease, exhibit, in certain states, many extraordinary phases. The struggling energies of conscience loaded with crime, have been witnessed by philosophers who have denied the existence of the moral sense as an original power; but of what avail is their scepticism, when they are bound to admit that this great sanction of God's law is incident to all mankind—having been found as vivid and strong in the

new-found islands of Polynesia, as it ever was in the Old World? It would be for the interest of mankind if those who call themselves its teachers, and dignify themselves with the name of investigators of truth, had looked more often at the workings of this extraordinary power—witnessed and described the agonies of the heart convulsed by its throes, heard and narrated the piercing cries and the flaming words that are wrung from the throat of him who is under its scorpion lash, felt and told the horrors of those sights and sounds—instead of inquiring whether it is con-nate or constructed by social and political institutions. Yet this, too, has been done, and well done; and it is not because the effects are unknown, or have been inadequately described, that I contribute the results of my experience on this interesting subject, but simply because I conceive they cannot be too well known, or too forcibly delineated, in a country where a struggling competition of interests and a fierce ambition are exerted hourly in attempting to still the voice of the monitor that so indefatigably and thanklessly whispers a better life.

About twelve o'clock on the night of the 15th of December, 18—, I was aroused by a loud knocking at my bedroom door—a mode of calling me to my patients different from that generally followed by my domestics; and, upon my requesting the servant to come in, he entered hurriedly, with some one behind him, who called out, in the dark, that Mr. T—, a retired undertaker, whom I had been in the habit of attending, had been shot by an assassin, but that life remained, and might eventually be preserved, by my speedy attendance. I dressed instantly, and accompanied the messenger—a nephew of the wounded man, called William B—, whom I recollect to have seen in his house, and in whom he had much confidence—to where my services were thus so urgently required. We had about a mile to walk—the residence being beyond the

town, in the midst of a small plantation of fir trees, and too well situated for the accomplishment of any felonious or murderous intention which the reputed riches of the proprietor might generate in the minds of ruffians. The night was pitch dark; our path was rendered more doubtful by a heavy fall of snow, which, having continued all day, had ceased about two hours before; and I was obliged to trust almost implicitly to my guide, whose familiarity with the road rendered it an easy task for him to get forward. As we hurried on in the darkness and silence which everywhere reigned, my companion informed me that the shot was directed against the victim through the window of his bedroom, while he was sitting warming his feet at the fire, previous to retiring to rest; and that, the individuals in the house having been roused, one had taken charge of the wounded man, others had gone in search of the perpetrator, and he, the narrator, had flown for me, in the hopes of yet saving the life of his guardian and benefactor.

On arriving at the skirts of the planting, we met some domestics with lights, and perceived that they were busy endeavouring to trace some well-marked footsteps impressed on the snow, and which, they said, they had been able to follow from the window where the shot was fired. I requested them to desist for a short time, as they seemed to be incurring the danger of defacing or so confusing the foot-prints, by the irregular and excited manner in which they were performing this important duty, that they could not be identified. They agreed to remain with the lights until I came to them, or sent some one more capable of conducting the investigation, and, in the meantime, I hurried on to the house, where a most appalling scene presented itself to my eyes. On the floor, which was literally swimming in blood, lay the body of Mr. T——, with two people —an old woman, the housekeeper, and a middle-aged per-

son, whom I understood afterwards to be another nephew of the wounded man, of the name of Walter T—— (the son of a brother, while my companion, the messenger, was the son of a sister)—bending over him, and endeavouring to stop a wound, made by a pistol bullet, near the region of the heart. The work of the assassin was not entirely finished: there was still a fluttering uncertain life in the body, which shewed itself rather by its struggles against the overpowering energies of death, than by any proper living action; a hemorrhage in the lungs, paralysing their vitality, and filling up the air cells, fought, inch by inch, the province of the breath, which forced, at intervals, its way, by a horrid crepitation, through the aperture in the side, while, as the wound was producing fresh supplies, it was not difficult to see how the contest would terminate. In the pangs of choking, the wretched man heaved himself about, and lifted his hands to his mouth in the vain effort to force an entry to that element so signally the food of life. The peculiar, and to us doctors, well-known barking noise of the *cynanche trachialis*, (or as the name implies, the strangling of a dog,) a few torsels of the body, and shivers extending from head to foot, preceded a sigh as deep as the relentless following blood in the lungs would permit; and, in a few moments, he expired.

Leaving the body to the charge of the housekeeper, I called Walter T—— to accompany me to where the individuals stood with the lights, with the view of tracing the foot-prints in the snow to the hiding place of the cool-murderer, who had committed apparently so gratuitous a crime. When we arrived at the spot, several other people had collected, among whom were some sheriff officers on their way to the scene of the murder, but who stopped to join in, or rather superintend this investigation. The foot-prints around the spot where the people had collected were too much mixed and confused to be capable of being traced

for some distance; but, further on, they were again discernible and traceable, and, at one place, the extraordinary appearance presented itself to one of the officers, of a well defined figure of a pistol imprinted on the snow, with the finger points of a hand applied to lifting it from the ground —suggesting to the mind of every one present the unavoidable conclusion that the murderer had dropped the instrument of his crime in the hurry of his retreat, and had snatched it up again as he continued his flight.

We proceeded onwards slowly, aided by several lights brought from the house; and, though the darkness of the night presented many difficulties to a successful search, we were still able to progress with certainty to the termination of the murderer's route. Whenever two distinct marks were traced, we felt no difficulty in identifying them, from the unusual circumstance of one of them bearing the impress of nail heads, and the other not, as if only one of the shoes worn by the culprit had undergone the coarse process of repair, in which, in Scotland, short nails with broad heads are often used. As we proceeded onwards, some one cried out that the prints led to the dwelling of Walter T——; a remark which seemed to be about being verified by that individual's house now reflecting from its dark walls the glare of the lights, while the footsteps were clearly verging towards the door. I looked round and stared full in the face of the man, as it was darkly revealed to me by the flickering tapers; and, though I could perceive no indications of terror, there were clearly discernible signs of confusion, which, however, might have been the consequence of innocence as well as of guilt.

In a few minutes, we traced the foot-prints to the very threshold of the door of Walter T——'s house; and, upon the instant, one of the sheriff officers laid hold of the suspected man, who looked wildly around him, as if he wished to escape from the grasp of justice, and at last appealed to

me if it was fair to blast the character of an individual by an apprehension on such slender evidence as the tracing of a foot-print among the snow from one house to another. I replied, that I thought the evidence very inadequate to authorize a confinement, and that, as to the mere detention, he could, by taking off his shoes, and allowing them to be compared with the foot-print, remove the suspicion, and be set at liberty. The man pointed significantly and triumphantly to the foot-prints he had that instant made, and had been making during the whole course of the investigation, and we saw at once that, although the size of the impression was nearly the same in both, there was no indication of nails in the prints of the shoes he wore; a fact he verified by instantly taking off and exhibiting them to the officers; who, after a minute inspection, admitted that the impressions we had been tracing could not have been formed by the shoes exhibited. This clearance was deemed sufficient by those present; but one of the officers suggested a search of the house, in which he remarked, very properly, the person might be secreted whose foot-prints we had been tracing; and the party immediately entered. There was no person within, nor could anything be seen to justify those suspicions that had been roused by the evidence afforded by the foot-prints in the snow; and the officers and party were about to retire, when some one pointed to a kind of garret, formed by planks or boards laid on some cross beams that extended between the two walls of the cottage, and quite sufficient to have contained a man. The officer accordingly mounted by means of a ladder; and he had scarcely got up, when he cried out, in a voice that made us all start, that he had succeeded in his search. I had no doubt that he had found there the concealed murderer; and the silence that ensued for a few minutes, as the officer rendered his discovery, whatever it was, available—coming in place, as it did, of an expected uproar,

struggle, or fight—imparted to the scene, at this moment, great mystery, which was, however, partly removed by the descent of the officer, holding in his hands a pistol and a pair of shoes.

The appearance of these articles, so strangely and providentially traced by their images in the snow, produced a great sensation, for no one doubted but that they were the very evidences we were in search of ; and so indeed they turned out to be, for the foot-prints and the shoes completely agreed, and the impression of the pistol on the snow was, upon examination, found to be clearly that of the one discovered. It was again referred to me whether sufficient evidence had not now been procured to authorize the apprehension of the suspected man, who still remained in the grasp of the officer ; and I felt myself, for the first time of my life, dragged, by the force of circumstances, into an investigation neither suited to my feelings and habits, nor connected with my profession, for the discharge of one of the duties of which I had been called out of bed at that late hour of the night. Unwilling even with the evidence before me, to pass sentence against the man, I inquired of William B——, his cousin, who stood by me, what kind of character he bore ; and ascertained from him that he was a person of idle habits, and had been in the practice, for many years, of living upon what money he could extort, by threats or entreaties, from the deceased, who had done much for him, and had never received even thanks for what he had done ; that he had known them have many quarrels, and one in particular a short time before that night ; and that the deceased had threatened, by making a will, to deprive the ungrateful nephew (his heir) of any part of his effects —a step now prevented by his violent death, which would put the latter, if not guilty of this great crime, in possession of his property, which was very considerable. These corroborating circumstances bore heavy upon me ; yet, such is

force of habit, I would have felt less pain in amputating one of the suspected man's limbs, than I experienced (and, though it is twenty years since that night, I have the recollection of the painful feeling still) in giving my required sanction to a commitment that might be the first step in a progress to the scaffold. During the few moments of deliberation that passed, before I could bring my mind to pronounce my verdict, the unfortunate man sought, with a fearful eye, my countenance. A shaking terror, that chased every drop of blood from his face, and struck his limbs with the feebleness of a child, was exposed by the lights that flared at intervals on his person; and every one read in these indications of fear, the evidences of his guilt. My opinion was delivered in accordance with that of the other persons assembled. The agitation of the culprit rose to such a degree, that he fell upon the ground, and, grasping my limbs with the convulsive clutch of despair, screamed for mercy, till the echoes rung through the planting, and came back upon the ears of the relentless abettors of justice. The more eager were his energetic appeals to feelings that were steeled against the cries and sobs of a murderer, the more determined were the people to do their duty to the injured laws of their country; and as he, on relinquishing the grasp of my knees, was extended on the ground, laying about him, and casting up the snow, which he clutched with his hands, and even bit in his agony, he was again laid hold of by the officers, assisted by the people, and carried struggling to the nearest place where a cart could be procured to drive him to jail.

Next day I was examined by the law officers, and stated the facts I had witnessed, as I have now related them from my notes. Many others were examined, and, among the rest, William B—, and the housekeeper I had seen hanging over the body of Mr. T—; the latter of whom, I understood, gave testimony to the effect that she had, some

days before the murder, heard her master accuse the pannel of having stolen from him his watch; and an officer who had searched the house, and found the watch in a place not far from that where the shoes and pistol had been found, produced it to the men of the law, while the housekeeper and William B—— identified it as the deceased's property. Some days afterwards, a great advance was made in the evidence by another discovery, to the effect that the pannel had been in the practice of stating, to various people to whom he owed money, that he would pay them, with compound interest, when his old uncle (the deceased) was dead, as he, in the character of heir-at-law, would succeed to all his property; and, on one occasion, he had, in some drunken orgies, proceeded so far as to propose as a toast, in presence of his cousin, William B——, who spoke to the fact, a quick and safe passage to the soul of his uncle over the Stygean stream, which, to him, the heir, would become as rich in gold as Pactolus. A great number of other corroborative facts and circumstances were spoken to by many witnesses, which, at this distance of time, I cannot recollect: the evidence was, on the whole, deemed by the men of the law sufficient to justify a trial, which accordingly took place some time afterwards, and at which I was examined as a principal witness.

The scene of that day was, in an eminent degree, heart-rending; the facts proved seemed to strike the unfortunate man like thunderbolts, driving him into a state of stupor from which he was no sooner roused than he was again stricken with the same paralysing proof of his crime. The hand of the Almighty appeared to be occupied in tracing, before the averted eyes of the murderer, the secret purpose he had devised in the recesses of his heart, far removed, as he thought, from mortal eye, yet now revealed as evidence to consign him to the death he was unprepared to meet; and, as he prayed, ejaculated, wept, and swooned by turns,

the people assembled in court, while they could not doubt his crime, or conceal from themselves its enormity, pitied the victim of such agony of torture as he was apparently suffering, only, too, on the very threshold of his misery.

Having remained in court after my examination, I was called upon by the judge, on more occasions than one, to administer what relief was in my power to the unhappy being, as he lay apparently senseless under the bolt of some truth that came on him from the witness-box, as if to seal his doom in this world. I could do little for him, when he was struck by these moral impulses, except by administering stimulants; but, on one occasion, he lay so long under an attack of syncope, that I felt myself called upon to have him removed, for a short time, to an ante-room, where I took from him some ounces of blood. I have watched the eyes of patients brought back to sensibility, life, and hope, and seen the ray of the brightening prospect of health, success, and happiness, dawn on the drowsy orb; but I had not before witnessed the return of sense and intelligence to be directed, at the first glance, on a gallows, and I shuddered as I perceived the breaking in on his clouded mind of the consciousness of the situation in which he was placed —the terror of again facing that court, and that damning evidence, and the recoiling effort he made to escape—alas, how vain!—from the grasp of the officers, as they again proceeded to carry him to the court-room. When placed again at the bar, upheld by the officers, pale and trembling, the relentless forms of justice proceeded; the witnesses resumed the chain of evidence, and the unfortunate man was again subjected to the rack, under the torture of which his weakened body recoiled with feebler efforts, as exhausted nature denied the supply of the sensibility of pain. But the charge of the judge, which was hollow against the prisoner, ingenious in its reasonings and stern in its conclusions, again revived the slumbering agonies;

and the return of the verdict "Guilty" by the jury, was the signal for the commencement of a scene which the hardest hearted person in the court could not witness without horror. A shrill scream ran through the court-room, and was followed by the extraordinary sight of the prisoner clambering over the bar, clutching the clerks' seat, and struggling, against the grasp of the officers, to get forward to the bench, on which the judge sat adjusting the black cap with a view to pronounce the sentence of death. The roused judge vociferated to the officers, blaming them for their remissness; but his voice was overcome by the ejaculations of the prisoner, who cried for mercy, till, vanquished by the men, who held him firmly down, and even stopped his mouth, he fell senseless within the bar, deaf to the words of the fatal sentence, which now, in the midst of death-like silence, rolled over the court with a solemnity never perhaps witnessed in any place of justice before or since.

On being carried to the jail, whither I accompanied him at the request of the judge, he was with difficulty brought back to a state of consciousness; but it was only to be able to fill the prison with his unavailing cries. I could do him no good; and, though used to exhibitions of pain and misery, I was unable to witness longer this most intensive picture of the most agonized condition of unhappy man. I left him, but I was repeatedly called to him again, in the interval which elapsed between this period and the day of his execution, to bring the strength of our art to bear against the effects of a determination to refuse all sustenance, and to resist all the confirmatory aids of necessity, resignation, and religion. All the efforts of the jailor were not able to get him to take food; the unabated strength of his despair occupied every nerve, and chased from his mind all lesser pains of hunger or bodily privations and wants; his moral apoplexy had extended its deadening effects to

his physical system; and, as he lay chained by the leg to his stone couch, it could have been detected only from low murmuring groans, alternated, at long intervals, with sudden yells, that there was any real living action in his mind or body.

The ministrations of the clergymen who attended him were likely to be of greater service to him than anything within the power of our professional art; yet they informed me that such was the force of the agony under which he laboured, that all their efforts had been unavailing to introduce into his mind any one sustaining or comforting principle or sentiment. For many days, his determination to take no food continued as strong as at the beginning, whereby his whole system became emaciated and deranged; and, even when the burning pangs of hunger and thirst, the most acute of all bodily pains, rose upon him to such a height that his moral anguish was forced, for a moment, to cede some portion of the territory of feeling to their irresistible impulse, he gave way to the imperative necessity like a maniac, starting up and seizing the can of water that stood by his couch, and, after draining it to the bottom, dashing it from him, and falling back again into the depth of his misery.

The period of his execution was approaching; but he had become so weak that I gave it as my opinion that he would not be able to walk to the gallows. A fever had been induced by the inflammation which generally results from hunger, acting on what we call the *primæ viæ*; and now, when the moral pyrexia had so far weakened his brain, that the material of suffering seemed almost to be exhausted, he was attacked on the side of the flesh with pains and paroxysms of agony, not much less acute than those he had suffered, and was still, to a great extent, undergoing, from his mental and incurable causes of misery. I had a duty to perform, and I did perform it, by applying to this

man, who was already “betrothed to death,” those remedies that might enable him to walk into the arms of his grim bridegroom; yet, I do not blush to own and acknowledge, that I secretly sighed that God would overcome my efforts, and, by taking the poor victim to himself, save him from the death which awaited him at the gallows foot. Yet, how vain are the aspirations of mortals, in those emergencies claimed by Heaven as its own vindicated periods and purposes of divine wrath! The food he rejected, when he was *able* to reject it, was supplied in the form of broths, when he was no longer sensible of the reception of that which was to sustain him for the bearing of the agony he dreaded, of all others—a violent death before an assembled multitude. He was saved from one death for the purpose of suffering another, and that in very spite of himself, through the instrumentality of the most pitiable state of man, the want of consciousness. When he came to be informed of the manner in which his life had been protracted and saved, for the purpose of being forcibly dragged from him by the relentless arm of public justice, he raved like a madman, expending the remnant of strength that had been saved to him in imprecations against me, in unavailing screams and clanking of the chain that still clung to his emaciated limbs.

On the day of his execution he was as feeble as a child; but the gallows does not admit the plea of illness as an excuse for non-attendance. Emaciated and exhausted, he swooned in the hands of the officers, as they knocked from his limbs the chains that might as well have been applied to the infant that has not yet essayed its first attempt to walk; and, if the necessary time had been allowed for recovering him entirely from these repeated fits, the period comprehended in his sentence might have expired, and he would have been beyond the reach of the law. The executors of justice, themselves the very slaves of form,

repudiated all ceremony, and the unfortunate being was carried to the cart, to be roused, by its horrid wheels, from a swoon to the awful consciousness of being in the act of being hurried to the scaffold, which he had not strength to mount, and yet could not escape. The scene that now presented itself was such that many individuals, whose morbid appetite for horror was insatiable, flew from the place of execution, unable to stand and witness the spectacle of a human being falling from one swoon into another, incapable of keeping his feet, and lifted *softly*, as by the hands of nurses, to receive around his neck the cord that was to strangle him by his own weight. Yet I was forced to witness this sight; for, by a strange contradiction of duties, I was called upon to attend the *patient*, and, by the use of stimulants, to render him susceptible of the pangs of death. Yet what was my art, my medicaments, to those of the executioner of the last act of the law, whose quick and sudden jerk ended in a moment life, disease, terror, and all the ills coiled up in the mortal frame of miserable man!

The circumstances attending the execution of Walter T—— (though not the condemnation, which was reckoned just), were such as to rouse considerably the public attention, and the prints of that day were filled with disquisitions as to the expediency of wounding the feelings of a nation, by executing a man in a situation of mind and body calculated to excite pity and commiseration, and to exclude the feeling of satisfaction which ought to follow the punishment of the most heinous of all crimes. Yet all this was plainly absurd; for, if punishments were to wait the bodily condition of malefactors, the art of man would soon cheat the gallows of its dues, and retribution would be the stalking-horse of deceit. The unusual sufferings of this individual were commemorated in a manner very different from the ephemeral columns of daily prints; for Dr. ——, to whom his body, conform to the sen-

tence, was delivered for dissection, anatomized it; and two years after, I purchased from him, for the price of fifteen guineas, the entire skeleton, to supply a want in my museum, and facilitate the osteological studies of my apprentices.

During the twenty years that passed after the period of his execution, I seldom cast my eyes upon that dry crackling memorial of the unhappy man, as it hung in grim majesty and stoical defiance of the changes of time, and of those exacerbations of passion which, in its animated condition, penetrated its very marrow, without a cold shivering remembrance of his sufferings. On the patella or knee-pan of the left limb there was written, by Dr. —, who constructed the skeleton, the words "Walter T—, a murderer, executed at —, the — day of —." I wrote, on the patella of the other limb—"For the extraordinary circumstances attending his execution, see the — newspaper, published on the same day;" and I retained a copy of the print in my museum, to gratify the curiosity of those who might be interested in the fate of the being whose bones, as they crackled to the touch, sung that peculiar and heart-striking *memento mori*, which few people, not professionally interested in the sight, can hear and forget. The indescribable interest produced by a skeleton is well known, among anatomists, to produce in young students a peculiar facility in acquiring a knowledge of the immense number of bones, many of them bearing long Greek names, which go to make up the aggregate of the human system; but the fate of Walter T—, which I always communicated to my apprentices, adding the part I myself acted in the dark drama, imparted a peculiar interest to the grim spectacle, which no memory, however treacherous, could, even with the assistance of years, disregard or renounce.

For a period of fifteen years after the execution of that

unfortunate man, my avocations did not lead me into any correspondence of a professional character with the individuals who resided at the house of Mr. T—, the murdered man ; but I understood generally, though I could not now tell how I got the intelligence, that William B—, his nephew, having succeeded to the deceased's effects, occupied his house, had got married, and had a large family of children. About the month of December, in the year —, I was, however, called again to the same house in the fir planting, into which I had not been since that night on which I witnessed the death-struggles of its former proprietor. The emergency which now took me there, was the illness of William B—, who had been seized with that disease called *tic doloureux*, perhaps the most excruciating of all the ailments incident to the human frame. We are entirely ignorant of its causes, whether procatartic or proximate—all we can say of it being, that it is an affection of the nerves of the face, and particularly of that branch of the fifth pair which comes out at an aperture below the orbit ; and that it is attended with such pain—coming on in an instant, generally without premonitory warning—that the devoted victim of its cruelty is often thrown on his back on the floor, where he lies, during the existence of the attack, in a state even beyond what can be figured of the wildest exacerbation of fevered frenzy. I have seen a strong man, who could have stood unappalled before a cannon mouth in the field of battle, running about like a madman, as he felt some internal monitor (a peculiarity in his case) telling him that an attack was coming on —holding out his hands, crying wildly for help, or as if he had been flying from the clutches of a hundred demons, and, in a moment after, laid on his back, in the full grasp of the relentless tormentor, uttering the most heart-rending screams, and requiring the power of several people to hold him down.

Under an attack of this frightful complaint, I found William B———, who, being in the clutch of a paroxysm, was scarcely conscious of my presence. He was extended on his back on a sofa; his fingers were (according to the practice of these victims) pressed on that part of the face where the pain shoots from; sharp cries, keeping pace with the intermitting pangs, were wrung reluctantly from him, filled the house, and might have been heard beyond it; his limbs were restless, striking the foot and sides of the couch, and sometimes dashing them as if he would have broken and destroyed all resisting objects; his eye glanced fiercely around, as if he disdained the supplication of mortal aid in so hopeless a cause. I knew the nature of the disease too well to hope to be able to do him, at that time, any service; the patient himself, by the pressure he was applying to the seat of the pain, was doing all that could be done to ameliorate his sufferings; and, having told his wife that I could be of greater use to him at a time when the pain was off him, I left him, with the intention of calling again, to suggest the application of the only remedy yet known for this complaint.

In a few days, accordingly, I called again, and found the patient recovered from a new attack which had come on during the previous night. He was greatly exhausted, looked pale and anxious, and dreaded intensely another paroxysm, which he said he could not be able to bear. He endeavoured to describe to me his feelings, when the disease arrived at its greatest height, and correctly distinguished between those neuralgic pains, and the fiercest of those that attack the viscera and muscles; bringing out, in his unprofessional language, what I have witnessed, that there is often a power felt by the sufferer of resisting, by some indescribable internal process, the latter kind of pain, while, in the former (and the *tic doloureux* is the worst species), the victim is conscious of no power within himself

of even *bearing*—all his energies, thoughts, and stoical resolutions being put to flight and routed by the fierce, lancinating, burning pangs; and even despair, the ordinary refuge of the miserable, seems to deny the tortured spirit the grimm relief of its dark haven.

As the patient proceeded in his description, he occasionally drew deep sighs, looked despairingly, and shuddered—all symptoms of the complaint from which he had suffered so much, and might still suffer; and, after a pause, he asked me, with a timid look, if the disease was known to medical men, or if I thought it *peculiar to him*. I replied that the complaint was well known, and very far from being uncommon; but that, unfortunately, we had not very many remedies to which we could resort or trust for a cure. He looked as if he did not believe me, or doubted my statement, and then asked what the best remedy was. I answered that it was an operation, whereby we divided a part of the facial nerve; and recommended to him the trial of that experiment, for as yet we could not pronounce certainly of its efficacy. He did not seem to be inclined to go into my views; and I asked him if he feared the pain of the operation, and yet dared to face that of his disease, which was a thousand times greater. He replied that he cared nothing for the pain of the operation; but yet he felt that he *could not* undergo it. I looked at him with surprise, and requested an explanation; but he answered me by the question—"Are we not sometimes bound to bear pain?" And, as he uttered these words, he seemed to feel great distress. I replied that I thought we were bound rather to get quit of pain by every means in our power, and that all mankind acted on that principle—a circumstance to which my profession owed its existence and success.

"But if this extraordinary, this *miraculous* pain is not sent for some purpose," he said, "why is it that, the moment

I think of removing it, an attack comes upon me?" I cannot explain that, I replied; and he then went on. "The last time you were sent for, I was seized, after my wife despatched you the message; and now," holding up his hand, "behold it comes again, the very instant I begin to talk of a remedy! Yet I must suffer—it is ordained that I must suffer—it is right and just that I should suffer. Welcome, ye dreadful messenger whom I fear and tremble at, yet love! You see, sir, he comes!"

The unhappy man spoke truth: an attack of his disease came on him at that moment, and he fell back on the couch, screaming, and pressing, with all his force, his hand against the seat from which the pains lancinated through the bones and muscles of his face. His cries brought his wife to his assistance; but it is one of the characteristics of this disease, that assistants and comforters can only look on and weep, so utterly does it defy and mock all human efforts. I left him in the charge of his wife, to whom I gave some directions, rather to revive her hope and remove from her countenance a painful anxiety that clouded it, than with any hope of affording relief. As I proceeded through the planting in which the house was situated, I heard his cries for some distance; and, while I pitied the victim, called up into my mind his sentiments, which struck me as being peculiar and mysterious. His conviction of some connection between an attack of his complaint and his attempt to get it removed, was clearly a fancy; yet the existence of such an idea indicated something wrong either in his mind or conscience—even with the admission that a pain so extraordinary might itself suggest, to a sober-minded man, some thoughts of Divine retribution, where there was no crime to be expiated of a deeper die than the most of mankind are in the habit of committing.

Whatever might be the ground of the delusion under

which the patient laboured, it was necessary, at all events, to remove the notion that an effort to cure the disease had any supposed mysterious connection with an attack ; the best way of accomplishing which was to hold forth, by calling and applying remedial processes, the handle of an occasion to the unseen power to make the attack, which, if not taken advantage of (and who could suppose it would ?) might expose the absurdity of his suspicion or conviction. I accordingly called again next day, and observed, as I entered, that the patient's eye scanned me with a look as eloquent as words, that I had brought with me another attack of his complaint. I ascertained that he had not had an attack since the one I witnessed, and then told him, that, as he would not consent to allow the nerve to be severed, I had brought a lotion which might prove efficacious, if applied to the diseased parts in the manner I explained to him. I held out to him the bottle, but he looked at it with fear, and said, he *could not*, he *dared not* take it.

" Doctor," said he, " this disease must take its course. It never was designed for ordinary mortals, and I cannot believe that you or any medical man ever witnessed in another these excruciating tortures. There is nothing human about this visitation." " Nonsense," said I, " I know nothing of miraculous diseases." " Like the forked lightning," he proceeded, " it leaves no trace of its progress. There is no wound, no inflammation, no fever, not a spot in the skin, to tell that, under it, and, as it were, touching it, there exists agonies, in comparison of which the pain of red-hot irons applied to the skinless flesh (under which nature would claim the relief of sinking) is as nothing ; for I cannot faint—I cannot get refuge in insensibility—I cannot die." " Still, all natural," said I. " No," he went on, " speak no more of remedies against Heaven's visitations ; but let me suffer, that, by suffering, I may ex-

piate. I shall immediately have another visit from my messenger. Oh, sir, who shall help him that is accursed of Heaven."

He turned his body from me, to hide his face, and I could perceive that he shook as if from a spasm of the heart. I told him that he talked like one under the dark veil of religious melancholy, or rather like one who had something on his conscience different from the ordinary burden of human frailty, making him attribute to retribution what was only a disease incident to mankind; that Heaven was not against the cure of any mortal; and that he would, for certainty, have no attack that day, nor, perhaps, for several days, especially if he used the lotion I recommended to him. He heard me in silence, shaking, at intervals, his head, solemnly and incredulously, turning his eyes to heaven, and clasping his hands as if in mental adjuration. "It will not do," he cried. "I have more faith in the language of this monitor than in that of frail man. I will have another attack instantly. Leave me! Why will you force me thus to brave heaven, between whose dread powers and me there is a secret compact recorded here—here?"—striking his chest. "This disease I fear and tremble at; but it is *not* hell, and, by bearing the one, I may avoid the other. So do I claim these pangs, sharper than scorpions' tongues, as my right, my due, my redemption. Oh God! what a price do I pay for relief from eternal fire!"

He sat down as he concluded these mysterious words, in an attitude of expectation of the coming paroxysm, and I conceived that my best reply to his wild and incoherent ideas would be, the refuting fact of the absence of any attack at that time. I, therefore, left him; and, as I passed along the passage to the door, was met by his anxious wife, who inquired of me, with tears in her eyes, if I knew what this malady was, which, leaving no trace of its presence, yet produced such a pain as she never

thought mortal was doomed to suffer ; and, above all, she was solicitous to know if I had got any insight into her husband's mind, which was loaded with some awful burden in some degree connected with this calamity ; for, since ever the first attack, she had got no rest at night, and no peace during day—his haunted vigils, his sleep-walking, his dreaming, his agonies, and prayers, being unremitting and heart-rending, as well to him as to her. She wept bitterly as she concluded this account of her sufferings.

I could give her little satisfaction beyond assuring her that the disease had nothing supernatural about it, as her husband thought, and giving it as my opinion that the unusual character of the complaint might, in a serious, contemplative-minded man, have given rise to the delusion that it came direct from heaven as a punishment of errors incident to fallen humanity. I informed her, also, of my expectation of removing this delusion, partly by impressing him with the disappointment he would likely feel that day in experiencing no attack consequent upon my remedial endeavours ; and, in a short time, I might prevail upon him to allow me to perform the operation I had recommended.

I left the poor woman praying fervently that I might succeed ; for, until some change was effected on her husband's mind, she could expect little peace, far less happiness, on earth. As I proceeded homewards, I had great misgivings as to my having exhausted the secret of this man's misery ; yet my efforts at fathoming the true mystery of this unusual imputation of a disease to the avenging retribution of an offended God were unavailing, and I left to time to discover what was beyond my power.

As I expected, I found, on my next call, that no attack had followed my last visit. The patient was somewhat easier ; yet his mind was apparently still greatly troubled. I impressed him with the vanity of the delusion under

which he laboured, and prevailed upon him to consent to the application of the stimulating lotion to the seat of the disease. In yielding this consent, he underwent a great struggle; I noticed him several times in the attitude of silent prayer, and, as I was about to begin the application of the medicine, he recoiled from my grasp, turning up his eyes, muttering indistinct words, and trembling like one about to undergo a severe punishment. All this had nothing to do with the character of the simple stimulant I was about to apply, but was clearly the working of his terror at the application of a remedial process of any kind to a heaven-sent disease; and I was latterly obliged to use a degree of force, assisted by the energies of his wife, before I succeeded in my endeavours to get the medicine applied. His fears and tremors, silent prayers and murmurings, continued during the whole time I was occupied in rubbing in the liniment; and, when I had finished, he fell on his knees and prayed silently for several minutes, and then threw himself down exhausted on the couch.

Two days afterwards, I called again, and found that there had still been no new attack of the disease—a fact communicated to me, on my entrance, by Mrs. B—, who was auguring from it the happiest results. On the day following, however, he had a most violent onset immediately before I called; and I ascertained that, for two days previous, the liniment had been discontinued, in consequence of a return of the patient's conscientious scruples; so that I could now reverse upon him his own argument, which I did not fail to do, pointing out to him and impressing upon him that, in place of Heaven being offended at his using remedial measures, he had now experienced its displeasure at not adopting those means which Providence points out to man for arresting the progress of disease. I therefore urged him, with all the force of my reasoning and power of persuasion, to consent to undergoing the

operation I had proposed, the dividing of the nerve—backing my arguments with the stated conviction that, if he did not consent, he might be a martyr for many years to the most painful of diseases, and be deprived of all comfort in this world. He heard me in vain ; for his conscientious scruples had leagued with his former terror, and he rejected my advice ; but he did it as one compelled by a secret power, which overawed him by its stern decrees, and scattered his opposing resolutions with the breath of its whisper.

Justice to myself and my profession required that I should not visit again a man who rejected my advice, and whose case seemed fitted rather for the ministrations of a servant of Christ than a disciple of *Aesculapius*. Several days passed without my hearing anything of the condition of the unhappy patient ; but I had no hopes of his having got quit of his neuralgia, which too often adheres to its victim like a double-tongued adder.

One evening I was in my study, reading an old copy of Celsus, over a fire nearly exhausted, and by the light of a candle, whose long black wick indicated the attention I was devoting to the old physician. The night was dark and windy, and I was assured that, if no emergency demanded my presence out of doors (which I fervently wished), I stood little risk of being disturbed by any *walking* patients, generally deemed by us the most troublesome of all our employers. At my side hung my skeletons ; and, among the rest, that of Walter T—— ; around were other monuments of the frailty and the agonies of human life, all too familiar to me to take off my attention from the old chronicler of diseases, their causes, symptoms, and cures.

While thus occupied, my bell rang with great violence and I started up from the study into which I had fallen. In an instant, my door was flung open. William B—— stood before me, the picture of a man who had broken out

of bedlam : his eyes flashed the fire of an excruciating agony ; his right hand was pressed convulsively on his cheek ; his left made wild signs, intended to supply the want of words which his tongue could not utter ; every symptom indicated that he was under the full grasp of his implacable enemy. Recovering his breath, he cried out, "I cannot bear this any longer." "Patience," said I. "No !" he proceeded, "the extent of human powers of suffering may be overrated by superior avengers. I must brave Heaven, or die under its exaction of the last pang of an overstrained retribution ; death will not come to my prayer, and I am stung to rebellion. Will you, sir, use your operating knife against the wrath of Heaven ? I am resolved. Though conscience cannot be amputated, this hell-scorched nerve may be severed. Come next what will, this must be ended. I am at last prepared."

This frenzied burst, wrung from a mind labouring under some terrible burden, startled and alarmed me ; and it was some moments before I could perceive the meaning which was veiled under his strange words and manner. He had been seized with an attack of his complaint, and, unable to bear it, had run out of the house to seek some relief at my hands. I requested him to be seated ; and, though I had to struggle with the disadvantage of candle light, and the want of one of my assistants, I resolved upon performing the operation before the agony had abated.

I accordingly rung for my oldest apprentice, and made preparations for the work, which, though simple, requires skill and care. The patient was seated on a chair, formed for receiving the back of the head on a soft cushion, and used by me for operations on the upper extremities. Everything was ready ; my apprentice came in, and, as he passed quickly forward, struck his head against the skeleton of Walter T——, that hung at the side, and a little to the back of the operating chair on which the patient was seated.

That *perterrificrepus* of dry bones crackled as the body swung from side to side, and attracted the attention of the man, whose eye, tortured as he was, sought fearfully the cause of the strange noise.

I saw that his attention was in an instant rivetted on the figure, and perceived that his look was directed to the words (written in large letters) on the knee pan. The knife was in my hand, and my apprentice was about to lay hold of his head. The attitude of the man arrested my eye, and I witnessed, what I have often heard of, but never saw before, that extraordinary erection of the hair of the head, produced by extreme fear, and known by the name of horripilation.

I now thought he was afraid of the knife—but I was soon undeceived. With a loud yell he started up suddenly and violently—his hair seemed to move with horror—his body was in the attitude of flying from the figure, yet his limbs obeyed not his fear; he stood rivetted to the spot, with his eyes chained on the skeleton, his lips wide open, and his hands extended. In this position he remained for several seconds, while my apprentice and I gazed on in wonder on the horror-stricken victim.

“I said I would brave Heaven,” he exclaimed in wild accents, “by curing a heaven-sent disease; but is Heaven to be braved by man? How came that figure there?”

“That is easily explained,” said I.

“It is”—he continued—“my cousin, Walter T_____, who died for me? Is he not heaven-sent also? See, he moves and nods his grim head at me, and says, ‘You shall not escape the vengeance of the Almighty. The nerve shall not be cut, and your agonies must continue to the last moment of your existence.’ And who has a better right to speak these flaming words, than he whose cause is vindicated by the powers above—he whose agonies, produced by me—me, wretched, miserable man!—were ended by an

unjust death on the scaffold, where I should have expiated the crime for which he suffered. Guard me from that grim spectre! I cannot stand that sight!" And, with a loud crash, he fell on the floor.

In the midst of the confusion produced in my mind by what I had seen and heard, the glare of a revealed mystery flashed upon me; and I shuddered even to think of what might turn out to be true. Could it be possible that that wretched man whose bones hung before me—whose sufferings at his trial, in the jail, on the scaffold, were unprecedented, and such as no man ever endured—was innocent of the crime for which he was hanged? Even the suspicion was too painful to me; and I recoiled from the skeleton, as my eye, led by my thoughts, rested on the grim memorial. The agitation into which I was thrown rendered me incapable of thought. "Get him home! get him home!" I cried to my apprentice, and sought, in the retirement of another room, some refuge from these sights, and an opportunity of calmly contemplating all the bearings of this apparently dreadful discovery.

My apprentice, with difficulty, got the unhappy man into my coach, and took him home. Next day, I was called, early in the forenoon, by an express from his wife. I found him in bed, in the very room where Mr. T—— was murdered. An attack of his disease was upon him, and his conscience had roused him to a degree bordering on madness.

Vain, indeed, would be my effort to describe what I now saw and heard; the powers of the physical and moral demons that externally and internally, at the same moment, wrung his nerves and fired his brain, seemed to vie with each other in the degree of torture to which they were capable of elevating his sufferings. His broken exclamations shewed that he was more and more convinced that the pain he endured was a part of the punishment of the crime

that lay on his conscience ; and, being only a foretaste of that he was doomed to suffer in another world, his imagination was haunted by the shadows of coming ills, a thousand times more terrible than were those he was struggling with, dreadful as those were. Screams, prayers, and ejaculations, succeeded each other unremittingly. As Despair threw over him her dark mantle, he raised himself in the bed, and, grasping the bedclothes, wrung them between his hands, and twisted them in intricate tangles round his arms, beating his head against the posts, and gnashing his teeth with the fury of a maniac.

I waited until the paroxysm should pass over, in order to get from him the dreadful truth. His wife looked on him with eyes where no tear softened the fiery glance of horror and despair, and I conjectured, from her changed appearance, that she had heard some part of his confession. All at once he became calm, and I perceived he fixed his look upon me. I returned steadily his glance. Holding out his arms, he said, with an effort to resist an impulse to fury—

“ Doctor, it must out. Heaven knows it, and what avails it that it is concealed from earth ? Dear wife ! once the beloved of my soul, know ye that, for ten years, you have nightly taken to your soft confiding bosom, a——.” Here he stopped, as if the word were a physical thing sticking in his throat.

“ A kind husband,” said his wife.

“ A murderer !” he said—“ ay, the murderer, first of an uncle, and then of a cousin ! Turn from me your eyes, and I will confess all—for now my relief is in confession ; and that will not be satisfied till I throw myself at the back of the prison door, and cry through the gratings to let me in for mercy’s sake. I lived with my uncle, but I was not his heir ; and the death that seemed long a-coming, could, at any rate, only benefit my cousin, Walter T——, whose appa-

rition I saw yesterday, and see now—dreadful sight ! My bad habits generated a morbid desire for money, which I could not want. I stole my uncle's watch, and heard him blame my cousin. My fancy took the hint, and I formed, with a care worthy of a better cause, a deep scheme, whereby I might, by one spring, jump into the possession and enjoyment of wealth. I waited the first fall of snow, and, with my cousin's stolen shoes, walked from that window to his house, where I deposited the originals of the foot-prints, together with a pistol and the stolen watch, by introducing them through a small skylight on the top of his house. I then returned to my uncle's house by another path, entered his bed-room, where he was sleeping at the fire, pretended that some one was at the window, drew it up so that the servants might hear it, turned round, shot (with another pistol) my uncle through the chest, and cried out at the window to stop the murderer. An alarm was raised ; some one ran for my cousin, who was found in his own house ; while I hastened for you, who became a tool in my hands. Why need I proceed ? What follows is known. What preceded my crime, I have no patience to tell : how I seduced my cousin, in moments of intoxication, to engage in conversations afterwards proved against him ; how I got my uncle to blame him for stealing the watch, in presence of the housekeeper ; and many other ingenious treacherous schemes. By getting my cousin convicted, I removed out of the way the only impediment between me and my uncle's property. He was hanged, and I took his place as my uncle's heir. Thus was I guilty of a double murder. How, O God ! have I been brought to tell what I have for fifteen years shuddered to think of ? But it has been wrung from me by a heaven-sent calamity, which has, for these few moments, intermitted, by Heaven's decree, to allow me breath and power to make this confession ; and now, being done, my pain comes again, and these crackling bones of

Walter T—— rattle in my ears and dance before my eyes. Whither shall I fly for refuge? Heaven, earth, and hell are against me—my own flesh wars with my soul, and my soul with my flesh!"

And he again twisted the clothes round his arms, and wrestled with the opposing energies of his own muscles. On the other side of me was a scene not less affecting. His wife, struck to the heart by the horrible confession, had fallen on the floor in a swoon. Shall I confess it? The instant I saw in her signs of recovery, I hurried out of the house. What I heard and saw; what I cogitated of the part I took in the death of that poor innocent man, Walter T——; what my fancy conjured up of his agonies, contrasted with his innocence, and the injustice that was done to him, by the misdirected laws of his country—was too much for me, and I flew for relief to the duties of my profession.

I afterwards requested my assistant to attend the unhappy patient in my place. He reported to me that, when he called next day, William B—— was in a condition, if possible, worse than that in which I had witnessed him. He had contracted an irresistible desire to throw himself into the hands of justice; and, in order to get his wish effected, had leaped from the window in his shirt, and had got a considerable way through the planting, on his way to the house of the procurator-fiscal. He was overtaken and seized; but he fought long with the people who had caught him—making the wood ring with his screams, and crying that, as the murderer of his uncle and cousin, it was necessary, ordained by heaven, and conform to justice, that he should be hanged.

My assistant had been able to yield him no relief; and I was called upon by Mrs. B——, who entreated me, with tears in her eyes, to try and devise some means of putting an end to the terrible state of suffering in which she was

placed. She attempted to make me believe that her husband was deranged in his mind, and had merely *conceived* the circumstances of the confession he had made in my presence. I did not endeavour to undeceive the poor woman; but the conclusion I had come to was almost exclusive of any doubt of the truth of what had been wrung from the patient; and I contented myself with stating that, if there was any delirium about him, it might be relieved by the cessation of the painful disease which, in all likelihood, produced it. She then inquired if it were not possible, by any means, however violent, to attempt a cure of the disease, in spite of the opposing efforts of her husband; and I replied, that the remedy formerly proposed might be resorted to if the patient were bound down, or held by the energies of strong men, while the operation was in the act of being performed; but that such a step could only be justified by derangement or madness, and the uncertain nature of the remedy was, besides, a strong reason against its being so applied. Glad to grasp at any hope of reducing the amount of her misery, she was not inclined to hesitate, for an instant, about the propriety or possibility of the scheme of relief I had hinted at, and said she would have individuals present in the house to apply the necessary restraining force, at any time I chose to fix for carrying the purpose into execution. For the sake of the poor woman and her distressed family, I felt disposed to make one other attempt at ameliorating a grief which, however, I feared, had its cause much beyond the reach of a surgeon's knife, and fixed an hour next day for attending at the house, with a view to ascertain if any consent could be wrung from the unhappy man to allow something to be done at least for his body.

I accordingly kept my appointment; but found that matters had, in the meantime, assumed a different and more serious aspect. The patient was now bound down by

strong ropes, and two stout men sat beside him, ready to resist his efforts to escape, or to commit any act of violence. He had that morning jumped from his bedroom window, and flown, in a state approaching to nakedness, to the prison, situated about two miles distant, at the door of which he knelt down, and beseeched the jailor, in tones of piteous supplication, to receive him into what he called his *sanctuary*. The jailor, seeing a naked man supplicating to get *in* to a place so generally feared and shunned, concluded he was mad, and paid little attention to his asseverations—made, as he said, before God, that he was guilty of murder, and wished to be hanged, with a view to an expiation of his crime. Having got his name, the jailor sent to his wife, and, assistance having been brought, he was carried home, crying bitterly all the way that no one would take vengeance on him, and ease the burning pangs of his mind, by punishing him according to the extent of his crime.

The moment I entered, I saw, by the peculiar light and motion of his eye, that he was on the point of madness, which would likely exhibit itself in the form of a brain fever. He looked wildly at me, and, rugging at the ropes, attempted to release himself. I remember many of his expressions, which, however affecting through the ear, would appear only as rant to a reader.

The supernatural strength of an access of brain fever enabled him to burst the cords; and the attendants were obliged to apply their hands to keep him down, until they could again bind him. Phrenitis, with all its horrors, had commenced. The history of a brain fever is the history of a man when he has ceased, from the very extremity of his agony, to interest feelings, which seek in vain for traces of humanity in the raving maniac; and why should I try to describe what never has been, and never will be described with any approach to the terrible truth? Heaven was at last merciful, and closed his sufferings with the seal of death.

RATTLING, ROARING WILLIE.

RATTLING, ROARING WILLIE, an ancient Border minstrel, was a well-known character, in the south of Scotland, in the time of James V. His title, Sir Walter Scott supposes, was derived from his bullying disposition; but this, we humbly think, is not precisely the term which the great novelist ought to have employed on the occasion. It rather does Willie an injustice; for, although, according to Johnson, bully means no more than a noisy, quarrelsome person, yet usage has associated with it a certain degree of cowardice; and we are apt to look on a bully as a vain-glorious fellow, who is much more ready with his tongue than his hands. Now, this was by no means the case with Willie. He certainly was a rattling, roaring boy, as described by his soubriquet; but he was no craven; he could drink and fight with any man that ever handled cup or cudgel; was at all times as ready to bite as to bark; and, indeed, it was his pugnacious disposition that ultimately caused his destruction.*

Our intention at present, however, is, not to enter into a defence of Willie's character, which we suspect must now be left to shift for itself, but to relate an adventure of his which is not very generally known; and therefore, we go on to say, that our "jovial harper" once took it into his head to treat himself to a tramp through Fife, to see what kind of ale they brewed on the other side of the

* This sturdy beggar of whom Sir Walter Scott makes mention, was hanged at Jedburgh for having killed in a duel, fought with swords, one of his own profession. If the combatants had been knights, the survivor would have stood a better chance for a title than for a halter.—ED.

Frith, and generally, to see what sort of living he might pick up there. Having come to this resolution, Willie slung his harp on his back, took a stout cudgel in his fist, and, after partaking of a Hawick gill with a crony in the ancient little town from which the celebrated measure just spoken of takes its name, he started, and drank, and fought, and roared, and played his way through the country, till he arrived at the shore of Leith, where he intended ferrying over to Kinghorn. The ferry boat had just put off, when Willie reached the quay, all breathless and exhausted—for he had run every step of the way from Edinburgh, where he had stopped to refresh his inward man; and where he would have tarried much longer in the discharge of this important duty, had he not been told that, if he did not make haste, he would certainly lose the boat. On perceiving the latter pulling away from the shore—"Haud there! haud!" roared out Willie. "Back, ye villains! and tak me owre; and I'll gie ye a stoup o' the best in Kinghorn."

Obedient to Willie's summons—the more so, perhaps, on account of the promise that was associated with it—the boatman put about, and the minstrel was taken on board, and in due time safely deposited on the opposite shore; where, having redeemed his pledge to the seamen, he started for the interior of the country; and, after a walk of some fifteen or twenty miles, which he had traversed with various success, he made up to a respectable looking house at a little distance from the road, where he proposed to seek quarters for the night.

The house alluded to was the residence of the laird of Whinnyhill, or Winnel, as he was more shortly called.

Being a total stranger in the place, Willie assumed a modesty of manner and quietness of demeanour which, it must be confessed, were not amongst the number of his natural failings; but he felt that he could not, with pro-

priety, use the same freedom here that he did in his own part of the country, where he was well known to everybody. It was, therefore, with this sort of mock-modesty, that Willie appeared at the laird of Whinnyhill's gate, and sought a night's quarters from a person who happened to be standing at the said gate when he approached. This person was the laird himself.

"A night's quarters!" said the latter, in reply to Willie's request, and, at the same time, eyeing him archly, and exhibiting a degree of respect in his manner which Willie was grievously at a loss to understand—"that ye shall hae, sir—a score o' them an' ye choose, and the best that my puir hoose can afford, to the bargain." And, after bestowing on his visitor another look of intelligence, which intimated a vast deal more than the latter could comprehend, the laird conducted him into the house. On entering, Willie made directly, and of his own accord, for his usual quarters in such cases—the kitchen; but this he did in direct opposition to the laird, who was conducting him towards his best apartment. On observing, however, that Willie insisted on taking the former course—

"Weel, weel, sir," he said, laughing, "ye will hae yer joke oot, I see; but ye'll do me the honour" (this he said in a whisper) "to join me ben the hoose when ye tire o' yer amusement?"

To this proposal, Willie, though perfectly at a loss to comprehend the meaning of all this extraordinary kindness, readily assented; but, in the meantime, proceeded to the destination which he had originally proposed to himself. Here he found assembled the domestic servants of the family—lads and lassies, to the number of eight or nine. This was just what Willie wanted—an auditory; and he lost no time in giving them a taste of his calling. In ten minutes, he had the kitchen in an uproar with noise and laughter. He sang, danced, played, and pulled the girls

about, till one and all declared they had never seen such a harumscarum chiel in all their lives. To all these various sources of entertainment, he added some of his best stories, which, as much from the sly and *pawky* manner in which they were told, as from their inherent humour, were found to be irresistible; and the consequence was, that there was not one within hearing of them capable of doing anything else than laughing or listening to the sly narrator.

Willie, in short, as he always was, was triumphant. Amongst the merry minstrel's auditory on this occasion, was the laird himself; and none seemed more to enjoy the fun than he did, although there was all along in his manner that most unaccountable degree of respect for his guest, which had already marked his conduct towards him, and which the object of it had such difficulty in comprehending. If this circumstance, however, puzzled Willie, how much more was he confounded, when the laird whispered to him, that, "as they had now had plenty o' daffin, he would be glad of his company ben the hoose, where the guidwife had prepared a bit comfortable supper for them!" It was in vain that Willie said, he "wad just remain where he was, and tak a mouthfu' alang wi' the servants —that he was not in the habit of sitting at gentlefolks' tables," &c. No excuses of this or any other kind would avail with the laird, who again bestowed on Willie one of those mysterious looks of intelligence which have been already alluded to, and insisted upon his accompanying him "ben the hoose." Finding that his host would take no denial, and perceiving, moreover, that it was at least all well meant, Willie at length followed the laird, and soon found himself seated at a plentiful board, with the "guidwife" dressed in her best at the head.

Much, however, as all this surprised the jovial harper, it did not in the least disconcert him, or deprive him, in

any degree, of the presence of mind and ready wit—shall we add impudence?—that was natural to him. Diffidence, as has been already hinted, was no part of his character; and he, therefore, very soon found himself perfectly at ease in his unwonted situation, and joked away with the laird and his wife till the roof rang again with the laughter of a joyous party; but it was not till the bottle had been introduced, and had made several rounds, that Willie began to shine forth in meridian splendour. The stimulating liquor had no sooner begun to operate, than he broke out into the wild and obstreperous glee which so signally characterised him in his cups; and renewing (but now with double effect, in consequence of the drink he had swallowed, and the generally comfortable state in which he found himself after an excellent supper) the part he had acted in the kitchen, he roared, and shouted, and sang, till the very rafters shook—slapped the goodwife on the shoulders, and gripped the hand of the husband till he nearly squeezed the blood out of his finger ends.

Both the laird and his lady were delighted with their guest; and it is certain that he was no less pleased with them. As it got late, however, the latter retired from the apartment, and left her husband and Willie to finish the night and the bottle by themselves—a task which they instantly set about with great zeal and good will. Cup followed cup with marvellous celerity, and with each the bonds of friendship between the revellers were drawn closer and closer. They grasped each other's hands in the fulness of their hearts, and joined together in the choruses of the bacchanalian ditties, with which Willie, from time to time, at once varied and enlivened the festivity of the evening. It must be remarked, however, that, during the night, the laird had more than once hinted to his guest that he knew more of him than he was perhaps aware of.

"However, let that flee stick to the wa'," he would add. "I'm no ane to spoil onybody's sport, much less yours. Only tak my advice, sir, and tak care o' yoursel, if ye be gaun through the Middlemass wood; for there's been twa or three loose-looking chiels seen dodgin aboot there since yesterday morning."

"Ye ken mair o' me than I'm aware o', my honest friend," said Willie, on the occasion alluded to, in reply to his host's hints and insinuations, and at the same time slapping him on the shoulder. "I weel believe that, for I'm weel kent in the south country; but, bating the drap drink, and a sough about my being rather fond o' the lassies, ye could hear nae ill o' me, I think."

"Oh, no, sir—the ne'er a bit," replied his host; "nae ill ava. Thae twa things just comprehend the very warst I ever heard o' ye."

"And as to the chiels in the Middlemass wood, laird," continued Willie, "I'll tak my chance o' them. An' I should forgather wi' them, I hae a bit airn here" (and he clapped his hand on his sword) "that has stood me in guid stead mony a time before, and I'm willin to trust a guid deal till't yet. I can either tak or gie a clour, when such things are gaun."

"'Od, sir, but ye play yer character to the life!" shouted out the delighted laird. "I've seen twa or three maskins and mummins in my day, but confound me if ever I saw ane come up to ye! Ye haena said or dune a thing the nicht oot o' joint—a' clean and richt, as if ye had been at the trade a' yer life."

"The deil's in the man!" replied Willie, in amazement at the singularity of the laird's remarks, "and havena I been at it a' my life—ay, sin' I was nae bigger than a pint stoup."

"Ah! ha! ha! very guid, very guid," roared out Whinnyhill. "There's nae drivin ye into a corner, I see, sir.

Here's to ye again, sir, and lang may ye be spared to amuse yersel and ither folk too!" Saying this, the laird, who was already within a trifle of being floored, turned over such another quantity of liquor as threatened to consummate the catastrophe.

His example was immediately followed by Willie, who, though far from being in a perfectly sound condition, was yet, from long practice, better able to stand his drink than his host. Still both were in such a state that it was impossible their carouse could go on much longer; and accordingly, by common consent, it soon after came to a close, but not, it must be observed, before they had finished every drop of drinkable liquor that stood before them. This accomplished, the laird, though his way was but a devious one, conducted the minstrel to his sleeping apartment, where he left him for the night; and here again the latter's surprise was excited, by finding that he had been shown into what was evidently the best bedroom in the house. The sheets were as white as a wreath of snow, while the bed itself was of the softest down, presenting to Willie a very striking contrast to the bundles of straw and coarse ragged mats which formed his usual couch during his peregrinations.

On observing this climax to the singularly kind treatment which he had met with in his present quarters, Willie flung himself down into a chair, and endeavoured to think as well as he could over the events of the night, and to see if he could hit upon any plausible conjecture regarding the cause of the extraordinary hospitality that had been shown him; and, with a look of drunken gravity, he began thus to cogitate within himself.

"The deil hae me, but this beats a'! I've often heard the folk o' Fife were queer folk, and, by my faith, I find it true. But it's a' on the richt side. I wish I could find such queer folk everywhar I gaed to. Nae queer folk o'

this kind in our part o' the country. Faith, Willie, lad, ye fell on yer feet whan ye cam here. The best in the hoose ! Naething less, as I'm a sinner ; and as much drink as"—here Willie hiccupped violently—"as ony decent man wad wish to hae under his belt—that's, no to be the waur o't ; and, to crown a', a bed that nicht ser' the King himsel. This is what I ca' treating a man weel. And such a canty hearty cock o' a landlord, too ! I haena seen his match this mony a day, and I'm fear'd they're owre thin sAWN for me to see't for mony a day to come." And here Willie paused for a considerable time, to indulge in fancies which were either too profound or came too thick for utterance. At length, however, starting up from his reverie, having been unable, evidently, to make anything of his conjecture, "I'm much obliged to him, at ony rate," he muttered, "and that's a' I can say about it." And, immediately after, he tumbled into bed. Willie, however, had not lain here more than a minute, when his attention was attracted by a low murmuring, as if of two persons in conversation in the adjoining apartment.

The partition, which was close by his ear, was of wood; and he found that, by listening attentively, he could gather pretty fully all that passed; and to this employment, therefore, he immediately betook himself, when he discovered that the laird and his wife were the speakers. The result of Willie's application on this occasion was his overhearing the following conversation. His own share of it, as it was of course interjectional and inaudible to the parties, we put within parentheses.

"But are ye sure it's him, John, after a'?" said the laird's better half.

(“Him!—wha?” muttered Willie.)

“Sure that it's him, guidwife!” replied the laird, hiccupping at intervals as he spoke. “Deil a doot's o' that! Did ye ever ken me mistaen in my life, when I said I was

sure o' a' thing ? I kent him the moment I clapped my ee upon him, although I never saw him in my life before."

("Did ye, faith ?" here again interjected Willie, who had no doubt that he himself was the subject of the conversation to which he was listening. "My word, then, but ye're a gleg chiel.")

"There's that about him that canna be mistaen by ony thing o' a quick ee, however he may disguise himsel."

("Disguise himsel ! What does the body mean by that ? Whan did I disguise mysel, unless it war wi' liquor ? Maybe he means that though.")

"And, besides," continued the unconscious speaker, "hadna I certain information, frae a quarter that I couldna doot, that he had set oot on ane o' his vagaries, and that there was every reason to believe that he had come oor way. And it's the very dress, too, that was described to me."

("By my troth, then, but that's queer aneuch !" here quoth Willie. "Wha the deil could hae tellt you that I was on the tramp, and that I was coming this way ? My very dress described, too—'od, that's unaccountable.")

"It's a queer notion that o' the man's wanderin aboot the country this way," here interposed the laird's wife. "I'm sure he maun meet wi' mony odd adventures whan he's on thae tramps."

("Deil a doot's o't—mony a ane ; and that I hae met wi' the nicht's ane o' them. But what's strange in the notion o' me gaun aboot the country ? How else could I mak a leevin o't ?")

"His faither had the same trick before him," replied the laird to his wife's remarks.

("That's a curst lie—my faither, honest man, was a douce, decent, sober-livin weaver.")

"I reckon't, guidwife, a lucky thing that he has come oor way."

(“Do ye, indeed!—then, feth, say do I.”)

“He’ll no forget oor kindness, I dare say.”

(“The ne’er a bit o’ that I’ll do.”)

“And maybe he’ll help us to oor ain again, frae the laird o’ Haudthegrip.”

(“Wi’ great pleasure. But hoo do you expect such a service as that frae the like o’ me?”)

“I’ve heard o’ his doin the like afore. But I say, guidwife, mind we maunna just let on barefacedly that we ken wha he is; for I can see, frae the way he took my hints the nicht, that he doesna like it. A’ that I could do, I could na drive him into a corner on that subject. He aye shyed the question. Sae we maun tak nae mair notice o’t; for ye ken kings are kittle cattle to deal wi’.”

(“Kings! Whar the deevil are ye noo, laird? What’s a’ this aboot?”)

“So they’re said to be, John,” replied the laird’s better half; “and I think the less we hae to do wi’ them the better.”

(“My feth, ye’re richt there, guidwife, as I ken to my cost. I was ance very near hanged by the king by mistake, amang a wheen Border rievers that he strung up. The rope was aboot my neck before he wad listen to my story, or be convinced that I wasna ane o’ the gang.”)

“This is the first night,” continued the laird’s wife, “ever a king was under my roof, and I hope it’ll be the last.”

Here we must interrupt the dialogue for a moment to say that it would have done any man’s heart good to have seen the expression of Willie’s countenance when this last sentence reached his ear. The painter’s art alone could convey a correct idea of the look of perplexity and amazement which it exhibited. A glimmering of the facts of that singular case which will shortly be made to appear plain enough, began to break in upon him. But, as he

could not yet entirely trust to its feeble light—in other words, could not believe what he heard, or rather could not believe that it applied to him—he lay as still as death, scarcely daring to breathe till he should gather something more regarding the strange insinuation that had just reached him; and for this he had not long to wait.

"Speak laigh, Jenny—speak laigh, woman," said the laird, in reply to his wife's disloyal remark. "He's maybe no sleepin'; and I wadna for the best cow in my byre that he heard ye say what ye hae said. I assure you, for my part, guidwife, I'm very proud o' the honour. He's just as guid a fellow as ever I spent a nicht wi'. My faith, he tooms his bicker like a man, as your greybeard 'ill witness in the mornin', guidwife."

Here a loud and long-drawn *whee-o-ou* from Willie announced that he was now fully enlightened on the mysterious subject of the extraordinary attention, kindness, and hospitality of the Laird of Whinnyhill, and his wife.

There was, in short, he felt, no longer any doubt of the fact, that he had been mistaken by them for no less a personage than the king, James V., who as all our readers know was in the habit of going about the country frequently in disguise; and it was true, as the laird had said, he had heard that he was at this moment abroad on one of those whimsical perambulations; and it was farther true, that he was in the neighbourhood of Whinnyhill.

Here, then, was rather an odd predicament for the southland harper. And he felt it to be so.

"Ta'en for the king, as I'm a sinner!" said Willie—thus following up the whistle of amazement with which he had hailed the disclosure of the astounding fact. "'Od, this cowes the gowan! I've met wi' mony a queer thing in my life, but this beats a' oot and oot, as the weaver's wife said when she couldna find an end to the puddin.'" And Willie forthwith proceeded to ruminate internally on

the singular situation in which he now found himself ; and it was while thus ruminating that he was struck with the bright idea which forms the leading feature in the sequel of our tale. This idea was, to maintain the character which had been thrust upon him, and to continue to enjoy the good living which, judging from what he had already met with, was likely to accrue from the deception. He determined, therefore, to try and throw a little more dignity into his manner, and to be a little more guarded in his language—a good deal of which he felt would scarcely be becoming in a king, whatever character he might choose to personify ; and, in conclusion, he resolved, in all cases where he should perceive that he was not mistaken for a prince in disguise—which he was conscious would, after all, be but seldom—to give such hints as should induce the desired belief ; and, where it should appear to exist, to confirm it by the same means.

Having chalked out this line of conduct for himself, and having indulged in a few more speculations on the subject, Willie resigned himself to sleep, and, in the morning, awoke—a king in disguise.

True to the resolutions he had formed overnight, and not without ability to act up to them, Willie, on the laird's entrance into the apartment in the morning, to inquire how he had slept, looked as majestic as he could ; and, in a familiar, but somewhat condescending manner, saluted him with—

“ Ha, laird ? how dost ? None the worse for thy potations last night ? On my royal—ah ! on my word, I mean—thou hast been nearer regicide than thou wotest of. Another such night and I would be a dead man ! ”

“ The deil a fear o' ye, sir ! ” said the laird, now fully confirmed in his belief that it was James that stood before him. “ It's no a drap guid soun' liquor that'll kill ye, I warrant ; and it was nane o' the warst ye had last nicht. I

assure ye. It wad hae been ill my pairt if it had. And noo, sir," he continued, producing at the same time a huge bottle of brandy which he had hitherto concealed behind his back—"Ye'll just tak a hair o' the dog that bit ye. A toothfu' o' this," filling up a large cup, "'ll keep the cauld morning air aff yer stomach ; for, nae doot, sir, yours, after a', is just like other folks."

"Richt soond advice, laird, as I'm a—a sinner. I'll pledge thee most cheerfully," said Willie, stretching out his hand to take the proffered cup, and, thereafter, draining it to the bottom with an eagerness and relish that amazed even the laird, who certainly thought it rather odd in a king.

"Anither, sir ?" said the latter, encouraged by the rapidity of his guest's execution, and looking at him slyly as he spoke.

"Why, laird, I don't mind if I do," replied Willie. "It warms me like a yard o' Welsh flannel. If my mother's milk had been like that, laird, I would have been sucking still !" Saying this, he turned over another cup with undiminished gusto. Here, in truth, was a weak point in Willie's character. He could not resist liquor ; and had the laird persevered in giving him more drink, he would very soon have unhinged him ; for there is little doubt that he would have forgotten his assumed dignity, and have swallowed much more than became a king at that unseasonable hour.

Luckily for his guest, however, the laird desisted from pressing the bottle farther, and this danger was avoided.

Willie, again conducted by his host, now proceeded to an apartment, where he found a sumptuous breakfast prepared for him, of which he partook with an appetite that impressed his host with a very high and satisfactory opinion of the state of his sovereign's health ; and, being a loyal subject, the circumstance filled him with unfeigned joy.

On the conclusion of the repast—"Weel, sir," said Willie's host, "what direction do ye propose takin noo? I hear there's to be a gran' hanlin at Braehead the nicht. Ye might get some rare fun there, sir, an' ye gaed —just o' the kind ye like."

"Why, thank ye, Whinnyhill—thank ye for the hint! I'll just e'en go there, then. But what's the occasion, laird?"

"A very guid ane, sir—a hoose-heatin. The laird o' Tumlinwa's takin possession o' his new hoose, and he's no ane to stint his freens o' either meat or drink when he brings them thegither. Ye'll want for naething, I se warrant ye."

"Why, faith, mine honest friend, and these are just the quarters I like," replied Willie, very well pleased to have got such a useful hint as to the direction he ought next to take.

"But," continued the laird, "mind the Middlemass wood, sir, and keep a gleg ee about ye when ye're passin through't; for, as I was sayin before, there's some gay unchancy chiels thereabouts enow."

"Never fear me, laird," replied Willie; "I'll gie as guid's I get ony day—let who likes try't."

Willie being now ready to resume his journey, and having expressed a wish to do so without farther delay—for, in truth, he was not sure how long he might escape detection—the laird accompanied him a little way, to see him, as he said, fairly on his way.

At parting, Willie took his host by the hand, and said, with all the dignity he could muster, and with a look which was intended to convey a great deal more than it would have been perfectly proper to express—

"Fare-ye-well, laird, and many thanks for your hospitality. Depend upon it, I will not soon forget it. It may stand thee in good stead some day." And with this he

walked off with as much majesty as he could conveniently assume, leaving the laird of Whinnyhill highly delighted with his good fortune in having had an opportunity of making the personal acquaintance and friendship of his sovereign.

Willie, in the meantime, pursued his way ; and, after two or three hours' smart walking, found himself entering the wood about which he had been cautioned by his late host ; and, although as indifferent to danger of the kind here threatened as most men, he thought there would be no harm in keeping the sharp look-out recommended to him.

He now accordingly proceeded with a more wary step, and kept peering around him as he advanced, to prevent his being taken by surprise. And it was not long ere he found that neither his own caution nor the hints which his late host had given him were unnecessary. When he had got about half way through the wood, he perceived three or four suspicious-looking fellows skulking amongst the trees a little in advance of him, and directly in the route he was pursuing.

“ By St. Andrew, there they are ! ” said Willie, on observing the persons alluded to—“ the very chiels the laird spoke aboot, or I’m greatly mistaen.” And he began to free his sword hilt from those parts of his garment which were likely to interfere with its ready use. Although somewhat alarmed at the appalling odds against him, Willie resolutely held on his course till he arrived within a few paces of the foremost, who stood directly in his way with a drawn sword in his hand, and who he now perceived was masked and muffled to the eyes in a cloak, as were also all his companions.

On perceiving the hostile attitude of the fellow, Willie also drew, stopped short, and demanded the reason of his being thus interrupted in his peaceful progress. To this

inquiry no immediate reply was made. The ruffians seemed doubtful of their object—indeed, Willie overheard them say as much ; and they appeared, besides, rather disconcerted by his resolute bearing and by the circumstance of his being armed. This he also overheard. Observing their hesitation, and thinking his assumed dignity, if announced, might terrify the fellows, and save him from the perils of an unequal encounter, Willie called out to them—“ What, ye knaves ! would ye kill your King ? ” Never were expressions more unluckily chosen—never imposition worse timed.

“ It is him ! it is him ! ” shouted out the ruffians in reply. “ Down with the tyrant!—down with the spoiler ! Strike, Geordie, strike, for a thousand merks.” And the whole rushed upon Willie at once, repeating their cries of “ Down with the tyrant ! the spoiler ! ” &c. But this was much easier said than done. Willie instantly retreated before his enemies. But it was by no means from fear. He was practising a very ingenious *ruse*; and it was one that he brought to a very successful issue. He retired from his assailants in order to separate them ; and, having succeeded in this, he suddenly turned round, and, before the man who was nearest him was aware of his intention, ran him through the body. Having accomplished this dexterous feat, which he did quick as thought, he continued his flight until another had got considerably in advance of his companions, when he repeated the experiment, but this time by striking a desperate back blow with his sword, which, taking full effect on the face of his pursuer, inflicted a hideous wound that instantly disabled him from all further exertion. The other two, seeing the fate of their associates, and horror-struck with the ghastly appearance of him that was just wounded, lost heart, and fled. But, for one of them at least, this attempt was vain. Willie’s blood was now up ; and, not content with

what he had already done, he gave chase, shouting out, as he pursued, "Down wi' the tyrant, ye villains! By St. Andrew, we'll see wha'll be doun first! If I dinna gie ye yer kail through the reek, may I never chew cheese again!" And with this—for Willie was as supple of limb, as dexterous and ready of hand—having overtaken the hindmost of the fugitives, he ran the flying ruffian through the back, who instantly fell forward on his face, a dead man. Thinking he had now done enough, and not a little exhausted with the exertions he had made, Willie, allowing the last of his assailants to escape, flung himself on the ground, to recover breath, exclaiming, as he did so, after a long drawn respiration, "Hech, but this has been a deevil o' a teuch job! This kingcraft 'ill never do. Here have I been as near murdered on account o't as ony decent man wad wish to be. I've nae notion o' the tred ava, whar ye're cutted up ae nicht like a sick wife, wi' the best to eat and drink, and the next to hae yer throat cut. It's no the thing, by ony means."

Such were the reflections in which Willie indulged on this occasion—an occasion which had shown him that the life of a king, as kings and subjects were in Scotland in his time, whatever respect it might procure him, in some instances was one of no small peril. Although, however, he had determined, from the experience which he had just had of the dangers of royalty, to resign the character, and disavow all claims to its dignities very shortly, he yet resolved on going through with it for one day longer—that is, until he had tried what sort of treatment it would procure him at Braehead, whither, the reader will recollect, he was now proceeding on the recommendation of the laird of Whinnyhill.

In this resolution, therefore, he in a few minutes started once more to his feet, and resumed his journey, leaving the dead bodies of the slain where they had fallen; but not, it

must be observed, before he had carefully searched them, to see whether or not there was anything about them to reward him for the trouble of killing them. But in this he was disappointed. On none of them was there anything of the smallest value.

"'Od, ye've been as puir's mysel," he said, on completing his fruitless scrutiny into the pockets of the deceased. "Deil a bodle! No as muckle as wad supper a midge."

Having said this, he rose from the kneeling posture to which his employment had reduced him, and, as we have already said, resumed his march through the Middlemas wood.

Leaving Willie to prosecute his journey, we request the reader to return with us to Whinnyhill, where we shall find a circumstance occurring which is intimately connected with the denouement of our tale.

Shortly after the former's departure from the place just named, another stout carle of a mendicant appeared at the laird's gate. It was the dinner hour, and, as was then customary in the country, and is so still, we believe, in some places, the doors were all carefully secured, and no egress or ingress permitted, till the conclusion of the meal. To this exclusion, however, the person now seeking admission to the laird's did not seem willing to submit; for he began to thunder at the gate with an impetuosity and vehemence that scarcely beseemed his very humble calling; and, as if this was not enough, he shouted out at the top of his voice to the inmates to open the gate to him.

Yet, however unbecoming his conduct, or however insolent it may be thought, it had the desired effect of procuring him the service he wanted.

The laird himself answered the call, though certainly more for the purpose of letting out his wrath on the noisy intruder, than to let him in.

"My feth, friend," he said, his anger greatly increased

when, on opening the gate, he found that it was a common vagrant who sought admittance, "but ye're no blate to rap at folk's doors this gaet. An' ye had been the best man in the land, ye couldna hae been baulder. My certy, it's come to a pretty pass, when beggars bang at yer door like lords!"

"The devil's in the old churl!" replied the undaunted beggar. "Dost not see that I'm knocked up with fatigue, man, and didst think I was to stand here starving of hunger, if a few knocks at your gate was to bring me a little nearer to some refreshment? Come, Whinnyhill," continued the free and easy beggar, at the same time slapping the former familiarly on the shoulder, "I know ye, man, I know ye to be a good honest fellow, and one who grudges nobody either bite or sup. So, let's have something to eat directly." And he bestowed another hearty smack on the laird's shoulder.

"By my feth, sirrah?" replied the latter, amazed and irritated at the singular ease and impudence of the mendicant, and above all at his presumptuous familiarity, "but that's a new way to seek awmous. 'Od, freen, an' ye lack onything, it 'ill no be for want o' askin'."

"Why, Whinnyhill, how should I get, if I didn't ask?" said the mendicant. "Take my word for't, Whinny, when you want a thing there's nothing like asking. Your modest fool always comes off with an empty hand, and maybe an empty stomach too. Why, man, dost think people will run after one offering one what one wants without solicitation? No, no; and, besides, a thing that's worth having is always worth asking."

"Ye're maybe no far wrang there, freend," said the laird; "but ye'll allow me to say that ye're ane o' the bauldest, no to say ane o' the impudentest beggars, I hae seen for a while. Nevertheless, ye may step into the kitchen there, and get a mouthfu' o' what's gaun; but mind ye, dinna

kick up such a stramash at my yett again, when ye come seekin an awmous, or I'll maybe let ye cool your heels awhile or ye win in, and thankfu' if I dinna set the dog on ye."

"The beggar man he thumped at the yett
 Till bolt and bar did flee, O,
 And aye he swore, as he thumped again,
 That denied he wadna be, O.
 Fal de ral, al al al, reedle al de ral,
 Fal de ral, al al al, de reedle ee di.

"The beggar man he thumped at the yett
 Till bolt and bar did flee, O,
 When wha should come out but the laird himsel,
 And an angry man was he, O.
 Fal de ral," &c.

Such was the reply, chaunted with great vociferation and glee, which the sturdy beggar vouchsafed to the laird's more candid than courteous remarks; and it would have been much longer, to the extent probably of a score of verses, had not Whinnyhill impatiently broken in with—

"Wow, man, but ye're an ill-mannered graceless loon as ever I saw atween the twa een. The greatest person in the land, man, is mair humble and respectfu' than you, when he's gaun about the country as ye're doin, and micht weel be an example to you and the like o' you."

"What mean ye, laird?—of whom do ye speak?" said the sturdy beggar, evidently somewhat disconcerted by the former's remark.

"Mean!" replied the laird, sharply—"I mean, sirrah, that the king himsel, when he ca's at ony decent man's house for a nicht's quarters, in his rambles through the country, is far mair civil and discreet than ye are."

"Indeed," said the mendicant. "Dost know the king personally, Whinny? Didst ever see him in the guise thou allud'st to?"

"Wad ye be the better if ye kent?" replied the laird,

angrily; then adding, in better humour, as if recollecting it was something to boast of—"To be sure I do, sirrah! and weel I may, seein that he sleepit here a' last nicht, and's no three hours awa yet."

"What, Whinny!—the king! The king here last night!" exclaimed the mendicant, now exhibiting in his turn, symptoms of surprise and amazement. "Surely you are jesting, laird?"

"Jestin, sir! I'm jestin nane," said Whinnyhill, angrily. "The king *was* here last nicht, sirrah!"

"Impossible, Whinny!"

"Confound ye, sir!—wad ye make me a leear to my face?"

"Oh, no, no, laird," replied the former, laughing; "but you may be mistaken in your man. At any rate, if it is not impossible, it is certainly odd, Whinny."

"Odd, sir. What's odd about it? Do ye think the king wad think himsel demeaned by takin a nicht's quarters frae me?"

"Nay, nay; not at all—by no means, laird," replied the mendicant eagerly, as if anxious to do away the offensive impression—"by no means. The man would be unworthy of being a king who should think there was any degradation in sitting beneath the roof-tree, and partaking of the hospitality, of an honest and respectable man like you, Whinny. My surprise, laird, was at finding that the king had been here; for I was informed that he was in an entirely different part of the country. Pray, Whinny, what like a fellow was this king you speak of?"

"What like a *fellow*, sir!" replied the laird, in extreme wrath. "My feth, ye're no blate to speak o' yer sovereign in thae disrespectful terms. Fellow, in troth! Repeat that word again, sir, in the same breath wi' the king's name, and if I dinna teach ye better manners, blame me! Ye've muckle need o' a lesson, at ony rate."

"Very good, Whinny--very good," said the sturdy beggar, laughing heartily at the angry earnestness of the laird. "I meant no offence, man—none whatever. I've as great a respect for the king as you can possibly have."

"It doesna look like it," interrupted the laird.

"But it is so, nevertheless, I assure you," replied the former; "and I like you all the better, believe me, for your loyalty."

"Ye like me a' the better!" said the laird. "And wha the deil cares whether ye like me or no? By my troth, but ye're very condescendin'!"

"Well, well, Whinny," replied the mendicant, again laughing. "But tell me, how did you know the king in his disguise? Are ye sure it was him, after all?"

"Sure enough," said the laird gruffly; "he mair than half confessed it himsel."

"Oh, he did!—then, there can be no doubt of it—none. I should like to see his Majesty, laird. Pray, can you tell me which way he has gone?"

"Ye're very inquisitive, freen," replied the latter; "and to be plain wi' ye, I like neither that nor your familiarity. The king's awa to Braehead—and that's the last ye'll hae frae me; sae step into the kitchen and get a mouthfu', and then tak yersel aff as sune's ye like." And with this the laird was about to walk off, when the mendicant, who continued to stand still where he was, called him back and said—

"Laird, harkee—canst keep a secret?"

"If it's worth keepin', maybe I can."

"Well, then," rejoined the former, "although not very nice in these matters, I'm not altogether reconciled to taking my refection in your kitchen, though, I confess it, most particularly hungry; and therefore ask you what would you think now, if I was the king, and that person, whoever he is, whom you took to be the king, was an impostor?"

"Wow, man, but that's a clumsy trick," replied the laird, chuckling at his own ready sagacity and penetration. "I'm owre far north, lad, to be come owre that way."

"Well, laird," said the mendicant (who—we need conceal the fact no longer from the reader—was indeed no other than James himself), "well, laird," he said, smiling, "I assure you your penetration is at fault this time; for I tell you I am the king, Whinny!"

"And I tell you," replied the laird, "that I dinna believe a word o't; and mair, for your impudence in attempting to impose upon me, ye shanna get bite or sup here this day. Tak my word for that."

Dropping here the dialogue, we relate the sequel in simple narrative. It was in vain that James endeavoured to pacify the irritated laird, and to prevail upon him to believe that he really was the king, or to induce him to let him have the refreshment of which he stood so much in need. Obstinate at all times, Whinnyhill was particularly so on this occasion; and not all that the good-humoured monarch could say could move him from his purpose of denying him admittance to his house, or affording him the slightest hospitality.

Finding his efforts in vain, James at length gave up the task as hopeless; but, though not a little disappointed—for he felt both fatigued and hungry—he saw that he could not be displeased, since his churlish treatment by the laird, singularly enough, proceeded from his love and respect for himself. It greatly puzzled James, however, to conceive who it could possibly be that had taken up his incognito (for that some one had done so he felt assured), and seemed so successful in the use of it. The trick was a new one to him, and he could not help being tickled with the ingenuity of the impostor in hitting on so novel an idea. His curiosity, too, to see his rival, was great; so great that, on finding he could make nothing of the laird of Whinnyhill,

he determined on setting out immediately for Braehead, a distance of about six or seven miles, whither he had been told his counterpart had gone; and, acting on this resolution, he started directly for that destination.

On passing through the Middlemass wood, which was the direct and shortest route to the place he was going to, the king's attention was arrested by the dead bodies which Willie had left behind him, and which were still lying as they had fallen.

"Ha!" exclaimed James, suddenly stopping on perceiving them, "what's this? Here has been some lawless work, which I must inquire into when I return to Falkland." A hollow groan at this moment fell on the king's ear, and directed him to the spot, at a little distance, where lay the man who had been so severely wounded on the face by the back stroke of Willie's rapier. King James stooped over the dying man, and inquired who he was, and what was the meaning of the horrid scene around him. The mutilated wretch fixed his glassy and almost sightless eyes on the face of the king, and said, speaking at long intervals, and as distinctly as his little remaining strength would permit.

"I am a dying man, stranger; but I deserve my fate."

"Indeed!" said James—"then thy iniquities must have been great, for thou'ret in very bad case. What hand dealt thee that cruel blow, man?"

"The king's," replied the wounded man.

"The king's!" said James, in astonishment—"what mean ye?"

"I mean," said the dying man, "that it was the king's sword that left me as you now see me. We waylaid him in this wood, expecting he would come this way—and he did, in disguise; but he was too many for us, being armed, which we did not look for."

"And what motive, miserable man," said James, "had you for attacking the king? I'm sure to you, and such as

you, he has ever been a gracious prince. To none but his insolent and tyrannical nobles, who would make slaves of you and a puppet of him, has he ever been accused of severity."

"I acknowledge it," said the dying man. "But we were hired to do the bloody work."

"Ha! hired!" exclaimed James, in alarm! "who hired you? Speak, speak, man—who hired you?"

"That I will not tell," replied the man; "for I've been under obligations to him. But stranger," he continued, "as you would have the blessings of a dying man upon your head, you will—you will"—

Here the speaker seemed on the point of expiring; and the king, perceiving this, and dreading that that event would take place before the dying man could make any further disclosures—

"I will what? I will what?" he said, eagerly and impatiently.

"You will," resumed the wounded man, after a short interval, "repair to Falkland, and tell the king—the king—to beware of—of"—

"Whom, whom, man?" again interrupted James, breathless with the feeling of intense interest that now possessed him—"whom, man, for a thousand pounds!" he exclaimed, forgetting, in his impatience and eager curiosity, his assumed character.

Apparently heedless, however, or unobservant of the questioner's emotion, the dying man at length slowly added, "Of the Earl of Bothwell"—and expired.

"Ha! Bothwell! Bothwell!" repeated James, now falling into a profound reverie; "ay, is he at these pranks? He shall be cared for, however. I warrant he plays no more of them. But it would seem," continued the king, musing, "that this impudent varlet, my counterpart, has stood me in good stead here, and, by mine honour, done me good

service too. Had it not been for him, however unwittingly he may have thus come between me and danger, I must have been slain by these ruffians. I'll forgive the dog his impudence, after all. Nay, he deserves a reward, and he shall have it too." Having said this, or rather thought it, James resumed his journey; and we shall avail ourselves of the opportunity which this circumstance affords, to throw in a word or two, explanatory of the discontented spirit which had led to the attempt on the king's life above spoken of.

James V., it is well known, though an amiable and generous prince, and possessed of many excellent qualities besides, was particularly obnoxious to his nobles, on account of his persevering and successful efforts to restrain and limit the exorbitant power which they had acquired during his minority, and which they showed no disposition to relinquish on his assuming the reins of government.

With this political hostility, as it may be called, to his nobles, James, recollecting what he had suffered from them in his youth, mingled a feeling of bitter personal dislike; and the consequence was, an unrelenting and unremitting course of persecution on the one hand, and of impatient endurance on the other; and the attempt on the king's life, whose consequences our hero, Willie, had so opportunely averted, was one of the ebullitions of that treasonable spirit which this state of matters had engendered.

To return to our tale. Little more than an hour's walking having brought James to Braehead, he entered the house, which was one scene of mirth and festivity from one end to the other; and, uninvited, and, we may add, unopposed too, walked into the kitchen, where a number of country girls and their sweethearts were assembled, to share in the good cheer and jollity of the evening.

On entering the apartment, the king's attention was instantly attracted by a conspicuous figure seated at the

farther end, and very enviably placed between two uncommonly pretty girls, whom he was entertaining with a volubility of tongue and noisy glee that seemed to afford them great delight, and to have carried him far into their good graces. But the influence of the exuberant spirits of this joyous but somewhat obstreperous person, was by no means confined to his two fair supporters. He had, by the time James entered, evidently secured that pre-eminence which belongs to the character usually known by the title of the cock of the company. He was, in short, obviously in undisputed possession of the popular voice ; and there was no doubt was considered by every one there as first fiddle of the evening.

This jovial person, we need hardly say, was no other than our friend Willie ; and James, as he eyed him, at once guessed that he was the person who had done him the honour of representing him at Whinnyhill.

Satisfied of this, the disguised monarch stole quietly round to where Willie was seated, and whispered in his ear this courteous inquiry—

“ I say, friend, who the devil are you ? ”

“ And, I say,” exclaimed Willie, looking hard at the querist, and by no means making any secret of his inquiry — “ Wha the deevil are ye ? ”

“ Just what you see me,” replied James—“ going about the country seeking a living wherever I think it likely I may pick it up.”

“ Nae harm in that ava, freen,” said Willie. “ Puir bodies maun leeve some way or anither. They’re no gaun to die at a dike side if they can get a mouthfu’ for the askin.”

“ Surely not, surely not, friend,” replied James. “ But, I say,” he added—and now drawing Willie close to him, in order that the communication he was about to make might be inaudible to those beside him—“ do you think I

don't know you, sir, notwithstanding your disguise? If you do, you are mistaken. I know you well, sir. You are the king!"

"And what though I be, sir?" said Willie, boldly, but secretly surprised to find royalty thus again thrust upon him. "What's that to you? But, I say," he added, and now whispering in his turn, "as ye value yer head, mum's the word aboot that 'enow; for I'm in very guid quarters whar I am, and hae nae wish to gang amang the gentry. Sae keep a calm sough aboot it, or ye may fare the waur."

"Nay, nay, now," replied James; "I really cannot endure to see my sovereign in such an humble situation as this—a situation so unworthy of his dignity. It is unseemly and painful to behold. I will not endure it!"

"But it is my pleasure, sirrah," said Willie, angrily and impatiently—"and that's aneuch. Sae, mak nor meddle nae mair wi't, or ye'll maybe rue't. Do ye think I want to mak a spectacle o' mysel?"

"Excuse me; but positively, sir, I must insist on your being treated with more respect. I must inform the laird of your being here." And, without waiting for any farther remonstrances on the subject from Willie, or paying any attention to his anxious calls to him to return, the disguised monarch hurried out of the apartment, and desired one of the servants of the house to inform his master that a person wished to speak to him on important business, and that he would find him in front of the house.

Having dispatched this business, James walked out, and, at a little distance, awaited the laird's appearance. On his approach—"Well, laird," said the King, "dost know me? I think thou should'st. We have seen each other before."

The person thus addressed looked silently and earnestly for some time at the disguised monarch, as if perplexed by the question; but at length eagerly and joyously exclaimed,

at the same time doffing his cap or bonnet with the most profound respect—

“I do, sir—I do. You are the king!”

“Hush, hush,” said James. “Not a word of that just now. My crown’s in danger, laird. There’s a rival near my throne. Dost know, laird, that there’s another king in your kitchen at this moment?”

“You are pleased to be merry, sire. Pray, what does your Majesty mean?” replied the laird, smiling, yet evidently at a loss to comprehend the joke.

“Why, I mean precisely what I have said, laird. There is, I repeat it, another king in your kitchen just now; and a rattling, stalwart looking fellow he is, with a couple of very pretty girls, one on each side of him. But here is the truth of the matter, laird,” continued the king, compassionating the former’s perplexity—“here’s a fellow, at this moment, in your kitchen, who has taken it upon him to assume my incognito, and has, in this character, already imposed upon Whinnyhill.”

The “knavel!” exclaimed the laird. “We must have him instantly hanged.”

“Nay, nay—not so fast, laird. The fellow deserves a fright, and he shall have it; but he has done me good service, though unwittingly, and I must forgive him.” And James here proceeded to relate the adventure in the Middlemass wood, which is already before the reader.

When he had done. “Now, laird,” he said, “we shall have some amusement with the rogue. You shall wait on him; and, professing to take him for what he represents himself to be, respectfully invite him, nay, insist on him joining you and your friends at your own table; for I rather think he’ll flinch it if he can; and I shall, by-and-by, send in a messenger to announce my arrival, and to seek admittance; and we shall then see how the rogue looks.”

The laird, who was himself a bit of a humourist, readily entered into the spirit of the jest, and immediately set about its execution. Proceeding to the kitchen, he walked up, hat in hand, to where Willie was seated between his two doxies; and standing respectfully before him, informed him that, from some intelligence he had just received from Whinnyhill, he had come to solicit his illustrious guest to accompany him to a place more befitting his dignity, though still far from being worthy of it.

"Why, laird," replied Willie, after his best manner, "I thank ye; but, to tell you a truth, I'd rather remain where I am. I'm amazingly well here, and cannot think of leaving these twa bonny lasses." And here the gallant harper chuckled the girls under the chin.

"Nay, excuse me," said the laird, bowing low; "but I must insist on your accompanying me. I will explain myself farther when we get to a more fitting place."

"Why, if you do insist, laird," said Willie, "I really do not see that I can refuse you." And with this he arose, though with evident reluctance, from his seat; and, after comforting his fair companions with an assurance that he would rejoin them as soon as he could, followed the guidance of his host. This conducted him into an apartment where were a number of people assembled round a well-stored table, in the full career of social enjoyment. Willie by no means relished this display of company, as it greatly increased the chances of detection; but he resolved to brave it out the best way he could.

On his entrance, the party, to all of whom the hint had been given of what was going forward, rose to their feet, and stood respectfully till Willie was fairly planted in a large arm-chair at the head of the table, when they resumed their seats. Every degree of respect and attention was now shown to the mock king which could have

been bestowed upon the real one—with this exception, that he was plied with fully more liquor than it would have been altogether becoming to have pressed upon an anointed sovereign. In this, however, Willie himself saw nothing derogatory, and therefore continued to swallow all that was offered him, till he got, as was usual to him in such cases, into most exuberant spirits, when he began to entertain the company with some of his choicest songs and stories, and with the usual effect of “setting the table in a roar.” Willie was, in short, in a fair way of becoming, if not king of Scotland, at least king of the company; and had attained about mid career in his bright track of jollification, when a messenger entered, and informed the master of the house that a person desired to see him on business of importance. The laird, instantly obeying the summons, withdrew. In a few minutes, however, he returned; and, with an air of surprise and perplexity, said, addressing the company, but more particularly Willie—“Gentlemen, here is a very strange matter. Here has a person arrived at my house, who insists on it that he is the king, and demands admittance.”

“Admittance!” roared out Willie, evidently a good deal discomposed by the communication—“on no account admit him, laird. Tie the impostor neck and heel, and throw him into the nearest burn! Pack him off instantly.”

“Nay, nay, sir,” replied the laird; “I think we had better admit him, and leave it to you and him to decide which of you has the best claim to the dignity.” And before Willie could make any farther objection, James himself was ushered into the apartment.

On his entrance—

“Where,” he exclaimed, with a fierce frown—“where is the impudent varlet that has been imposing on the credulity of my subjects, by assuming my incognito? Art

thou the knave?" he immediately added; and now addressing Willie, who, completely crestfallen, was looking at him with the most rueful expression of countenance imaginable.

"And if I am, man," said Willie, in a piteous tone, in reply to this home charge, "ye needna mak sic a stramash aboot it, nor look sae dooms angry either. I'm sure yer royalty's no a whit the waur o' me haen't on for a wee bit; and, guid kens, ye're welcome till't back again, for it doesna fit me. Sae tak it, sir, and muckle guid may't do ye!"

Here James could contain his gravity no longer, but burst into a loud laugh. "And what, you knave," he said, "put it into your head to practise this imposition? You have fairly deceived Whinnyhill."

"The ne'er a bit o' me did that, sir," said Willie, now somewhat relieved of his fears, by the king's good humour. "He deceived himsel," And here Willie related, to the great amusement of James, the conversation which he had overheard between the laird of Whinnyhill and his wife; and concluded with, "So ye see, sir, he made me a king whether I wad or no; and, as he put on the coat, I just wore't, although it was like to cost me dear aneuch in the Middlemass wood."

"I've heard of that too, sirrah," replied the king, again laughing; "and it is for the good service thou didst me there, that I now feel disposed not to hang you."

"That's an ugly word, sir."

"Go to, go to, you knave!" said the good-humoured monarch, smiling; and, at the same time, drawing forth a well-filled purse from beneath his outer garment, and thereafter throwing it towards Willie—"There, sirrah, take that, and get thee gone; but mark me, my royal brother, see thou dost not try this prank again, else your

quarrel and mine may be a more serious one than it has been on this occasion."

Glad to get off on such favourable terms, Willie sneaked out of the apartment without making any further remarks ; and next day set out on his return to his native district, forswearing kingcraft and the kingdom of Fife for ever.

BILL WHYTE.

I HAD occasion, about three years ago, to visit the ancient burgh of Fortrose. It was early in winter, the days were brief though pleasant, and the nights long and dark; and, as there is much in Fortrose which the curious traveller deems interesting, I had lingered amid its burying-grounds and its broken and mouldering tenements, till the twilight had fairly set in. I had explored the dilapidated ruins of the Chanonry of Ross; seen the tomb of old Abbot Boniface, and the bell blessed by the pope; run over the complicated tracery of the Runic obelisk which had been dug up, about sixteen years before, from under the foundations of the old parish church; and visited the low, long house, with its upper windows buried in the thatch, in which the far-famed Sir James Mackintosh had received the first rudiments of his education. And, in all this, I had been accompanied by a benevolent old man of the place, a mighty chronicler of the past, who, when a boy, had sat on the same form with Sir James, and who, on this occasion, had seemed quite as delighted in meeting with a patient and interested listener, as I had been in finding so intelligent and enthusiastic a storiest. There was little wonder, then, that twilight should have overtaken me in such a place, and in such company.

There are two roads which run between Cromarty and Fortrose; the one, the king's highway; the other, a narrow footpath that goes winding for several miles under the immense wall of cliffs which overhangs the northern shores of the Moray Frith, and then ascends to the top, by narrow and doubtful traverses along the face of an immense pre-

cipice, termed the Scarf's Crag. The latter route is by far the more direct and more pleasant of the two to the day traveller; but the man should think twice who proposes taking it by night. The Scarf's Crag has been a scene of frightful accidents for the last two centuries. It is not yet more than twelve years since a young and very active man was precipitated from one of its higher ledges to the very beach—a sheer descent of nearly two hundred feet; and a multitude of little cairns which mottle the sandy platform below, bear witness to the no unfrequent occurrence of such causalties in the remote past. With the knowledge of all this, however, I had determined on taking the more perilous road: it is fully two miles shorter than the other; and besides, in a life of undisturbed security, a slight admixture of that feeling which the sense of danger awakens, is a luxury which I have always deemed worth one's while running some little risk to procure. The night fell thick and dark while I was yet hurrying along the footway which leads under the cliffs, and, on reaching the Scarf's Crag, I could no longer distinguish the path, nor even catch the huge outline of the precipice between me and the sky. I knew that the moon rose a little after nine; but it was still early in the evening, and, deeming it too long to wait its rising, I set myself to grope for the path, when, on turning an abrupt angle, I was dazzled by a sudden blaze of light from an opening in the rock. A large fire of furze and brushwood blazed merrily from the interior of a low-browed but spacious cave, bronzing with dusky yellow the huge volume of smoke, which went rolling outwards along the roof, and falling red and strong on the face and hands of a thickset, determined-looking man, well nigh in his sixtieth year, who was seated before it on a block of stone. I knew him at once, as an intelligent, and, in the main, rather respectable gipsy, whom I had once met with, about ten years before, and who had seen some service as a soldier.

it was said, in the first British expedition to Egypt. The sight of his fire determined me at once. I resolved on passing the evening with him till the rising of the moon; and, after a brief explanation, and a blunt, though by no means unkind invitation to a place beside his fire, I took my seat, fronting him, on a block of granite, which had been rolled from the neighbouring beach. In less than half-an-hour, we were on as easy terms as if we had been comrades for years, and, after beating over fifty different topics, he told me the story of his life, and found an attentive and interested auditor.

Who of all my readers is unacquainted with Goldsmith's admirable stories of the sailor with the wooden leg, and the poor half-starved Merry-Andrew! Independently of the exquisite humour of the writer, they are suited to interest us from the sort of cross vistas which they open into scenes of life, where every thought, and aim, and incident, has at once all the freshness of novelty and all the truth of nature to recommend it. And I felt nearly the same kind of interest in listening to the narrative of the gipsy. It was much longer than either of Goldsmith's stories, and perhaps less characteristic; but it presented a rather curious picture of a superior nature rising to its proper level through circumstances the most adverse; and, in the main, pleased me so well, that I think I cannot do better than present it to the reader.

"I was born, master," said the gipsy, "in this very cave, some sixty years ago, and so am a Scotchman like yourself. My mother, however, belonged to the Debatable-land, my father was an Englishman, and of my five sisters, one first saw the light in Jersey, another in Guernsey, a third in Wales, a fourth in Ireland, and the fifth in the Isle of Man. But this is a trifle, master, to what occurs in some families. It can't be now much less than fifty years since my mother left us, one bright sunny day, on the English side of Kelso,

and staid away about a week. We thought we had lost her altogether; but back she came at last, and, when she did come, she brought with her a small sprig of a lad, of about three summers or thereby. Father grumbled a little —we had got small fry enough already, he said, and bare enough and hungry enough they were at times; but mother shewed him a pouch of yellow pieces, and there was no more grumbling. And so we called the little fellow, Bill Whyte, as if he had been one of ourselves, and he grew up among us, as pretty a fellow as e'er the sun looked upon. I was a few years his senior; but he soon contrived to get half a foot a-head of me; and, when we quarrelled, as boys will at times, master, I always came off second best. I never knew a fellow of a higher spirit; he would rather starve than beg, a hundred times over, and never stole in his life; but then for gin-setting, and deer-stalking, and black-fishing, not a poacher in the country got beyond him; and when there was a smuggler in the Solway, who more active than Bill? He was barely nineteen, poor fellow, when he made the country too hot to hold him. I remember the night as well as if it were yesterday. The Catamaran lugger was in the Frith, d'ye see, a little below Carlaverock; and father and Bill, and some half dozen more of our men, were busy in bumping the kegs ashore, and hiding them in the sand. It was a thick smuggy night; we could hardly see fifty yards round us; and, on our last trip, master, when we were down in the water to the gunwale, who should come upon us, in the turning of a hand-spike, but the revenue lads from Kirkcudbright! They hailed us to strike in the devil's name. Bill swore he wouldn't. Flash went a musket, and the ball whistled through his bonnet. Well, he called on them to row up, and up they came; but no sooner were they within half-oar's length, than taking up a keg, and raising it just as he used to do the putting-stone, he made it spin through their

bottom, as if the planks were of window glass ; and down went their cutter in half a jiffy. They had wet powder that night, and fired no more bullets. Well, when they were gathering themselves up as they best could—and, goodness be praised ! there were no drownings amongst them—we bumped our kegs ashore, hiding them with the others, and then fled up the country. We knew there would be news of our night's work ; and so there was; for, before next evening, there were advertisements on every post for the apprehension of Bill, with an offered reward of twenty pounds.

Bill was a bit of a scholar—so am I for that matter—and the papers stared him on every side.

“ Jack,” he said to me, “ Jack Whyte, this will never do ; the law's too strong for us now ; and, if I dont make away with myself, they'll either have me tucked up, or sent over seas to slave for life. I'll tell you what I'll do. I stand six feet in my stocking soles, and good men were never more wanted than at present. I'll cross the country this very night, and away to Edinburgh, where there are troops raising for foreign service. Better a musket than the gallows ! ”

“ Well, Bill,” I said, “ I dont care though I go with you. I'm a good enough man for my inches, though I aint so tall as you, and I'm woundily tired of spoon-making.”

And so off we set across the country that very minute, travelling by night only, and passing our days in any hiding hole we could find, till we reached Edinburgh, and there took the bounty. Bill made as pretty a soldier as one could have seen in a regiment ; and, men being scarce, I wasn't rejected neither ; and, after just three weeks' drilling—and plaguy weeks they were—we were shipped off, fully finished, for the south. Bonaparty had gone to Egypt, and we were sent after him to ferret him out ; though we weren't told so at the time. And it was our good luck, master, to be put aboard of the same transport.

Nothing like seeing the world for making a man smart. We had all sort of people in our regiment—from the broken-down gentleman to the broken-down lamp lighter; and Bill was catching, from the best of them all he could. He knew he wasn't a gipsy, and had always an eye to getting on in the world; and, as the voyage was a woundy long one, and we had the regimental schoolmaster aboard, Bill was a smarter fellow at the end of it than he had been at the beginning. Well, we reached Aboukir Bay at last. You have never been in Egypt, master; but, just look across the Moray Frith here, on a sunshiny day, and you will see a picture of it, if you but strike off the blue Highland hills that rise behind, from the long range of low sandy hillocks that stretches away along the coast, between Findhorn and Nairn. I don't think it was worth all the trouble it cost us; but the king surely knew best. Bill and I were in the first detachment, and we had to clear the way for the rest. The French were drawn up on the shore, as thick as flies on a dead snake, and the bullets rattled round us like a shower of May-hail. It was a glorious sight, master, for a bold heart! The entire line of sandy coast seemed one unbroken streak of fire and smoke; and we could see the old tower of Aboukir, rising like a fiery dragon at the one end, and the straggling village of Rosetta, half cloud, half flame, stretching away on the other. There was a line of launches and gun-boats behind us, that kept up an incessant fire on the enemy, and shot and shell went booming over our heads. We rowed shorewards, under a canopy of smoke and flame; the water was broken by ten thousand oars; and, never, master, have you heard such cheering; it drowned the roar of the very cannon. Bill and I pulled at the same oar; but he bade me cheer, and leave the pulling to him.

"Cheer, Jack," he said, "Cheer!—I am strong enough to pull ten oars, and your cheering does my heart good."

I could see, in the smoke and the confusion, that there was a boat stoye by a shell just beside us, and the man immediately behind me was shot through the head. But we just cheered and pulled all the harder; and the moment our keel touched the shore, we leaped out into the water, middle deep, and, after one well directed volley, charged up the beach with our bayonets fixed. I missed footing in the hurry, just as we closed, and a big whiskered fellow in blue, would have pinned me to the sand, had not Bill struck him through the wind-pipe, and down he fell above me; but when I strove to rise from under him, he grappled with me in his death agony, and the blood and breath came rushing through his wound in my face. Ere I had thrown him off, my comrades had broken the enemy, and were charging up the side of a sand hill, where there were two field-pieces stationed that had sadly annoyed us in the landing. There came a shower of grape shot, whistling round me, that carried away my canteen, and turned me half round; and when I looked up, I saw, through the smoke, that half my comrades were swept away by the discharge, and that the survivors were fighting desperately over the two guns, hand to hand with the enemy. Ere I got up to them, however—and trust me, master, I didn't linger—the guns were our own. Bill stood beside one of them, all grim and bloody, with his bayonet dripping like an eaves-spout in a shower. He had struck down five of the French, besides the one he had levelled over me; and now, all of his own accord—for our sergeant had been killed—he had shotted the two pieces, and turned them on the enemy. They all scampered down the hill, master, on the first discharge—all save one brave, obstinate fellow, who stood firing upon us, not fifty yards away, half under cover of a sand-bank. I saw him load thrice ere I could hit him, and one of his balls whisked through my hat; but I catched him at last, and down he fell—my bullet went

right through his forehead. We had no more fighting that day. The French fell back on Alexandria, and our troops advanced about three miles into the country, over a dreary waste of sand, and then lay for the night on their arms.

In the morning, when we were engaged in cooking our breakfasts, master, making what fires we could with the withered leaves of the date-tree, our colonel and two officers came up to us. The colonel was an Englishman—as brave a gentleman as ever lived—ay, and as kind an officer, too. He was a fine-looking old man, as tall as Bill, and as well built, too; but his health was much broken; it was said he had entered the army out of break-heart on losing his wife. Well, he came up to us, and shook Bill by the hand, as cordially as if he had been a colonel like himself. He was a brave, good soldier, he said, and, to show him how much he valued good men, he had come to make him a sergeant, in room of the one we had lost. He had heard he was a scholar, he said, and he trusted his conduct would not disgrace the halberd. Bill, you may be sure, thanked the colonel, and thanked him, master, very like a gentleman; and, that very day, he swaggered scarlet and a sword, as pretty a sergeant as the army could boast of—ay, and for that matter, though his experience was little, as fit for his place.

For the first fortnight, we didn't eat the king's biscuit for nothing. We had terrible hard fighting on the 13th; and, had not our ammunition failed us, we would have beaten the enemy all to rags; but, for the last two hours, we hadn't a shot, and stood just like so many targets set up to be fired at. I was never more vexed in my life, than when I saw my comrades falling round me; and all for nothing. Not only could I see them falling; but in the absence of every other noise—for we had ceased to cheer, and stood as silent and as hard as foxes—I could hear the

dull, hollow sound of the shot, as it pierced them through. Sometimes the bullets struck the sand, and then rose and went rolling over the level, raising clouds of dust at every skip. At times, we could see them coming through the air like little clouds, and singing all the way as they came. But it was the frightful smoking shot that annoyed us most; these horrid shells. Sometimes, they broke over our heads in the air, as if a cannon charged with grape had been fired at us from out the clouds; at times, they sank into the sand at our feet, and then burst up like so many Vesuviuses, giving at once death and burial to hundreds. But we stood our ground, and the day passed. I remember we got, towards evening, into a snug hollow between two sand-hills, where the shot skimmed over us, not two feet above our heads; but two feet is just as good as twenty, master; and I began to think, for the first time, that I hadn't got a smoke all day. I snapped my musket, and lighted my pipe, and Bill, whom I hadn't seen since the day after the landing, came up to share with me.

"Bad day's work, Jack," he said; "But we have at least taught the enemy what British soldiers can endure, and, ere long, we shall teach them something more. But here comes a shell! Nay, do not move," he said; "it will fall just ten yards short." And down it came, roaring like a tempest, sure enough, about ten yards away, and sank into the sand. "There now, fairly lodged," said Bill; "lie down, lads, lie down." We threw ourselves flat on our faces—the earth heaved under us, like a wave of the sea, and, in a moment, Bill and I were covered with half a ton of sand. But the pieces whizzed over us; and, save that the man who was across me had an ammunition bag carried away, not one of us more than heard them. On getting ourselves disinterred, and our pipes relighted, Bill, with a twitch on the elbow—so—said he wished to speak with me apart; and we went out together, into a hollow, in front.

" You will think it strange, Jack," he said, " that, all this day, when the enemy's bullets were hopping around us like hail, there was but just one idea that filled my mind, and I could find room for no other. Ever since I saw Colonel Westhope it has been forced upon me, through a newly-awakened dream-like recollection, that he is the gentleman with whom I lived ere I was taken away by your people ; for, taken away I must have been. Your mother used to tell me, that my father was a Cumberland gipsy, who met with some bad accident from the law ; but I am now convinced she must have deceived me, and that my father was no such sort of man. You will think it strange ; but, when putting on my coat this morning, my eye caught the silver bar on the sleeve, and there leaped into my mind a vivid recollection of having worn a scarlet dress before—scarlet bound with silver ; and that it was in the house of a gentleman and lady, whom I had just learned to call papa and mamma. And every time I see the colonel, as I say, I am reminded of the gentleman. Now, for heaven's sake, Jack, tell me all you know about me. You are a few years my senior, and must remember better than I can myself, under what circumstances I joined your tribe."

" Why Bill," I said, " I know little of the matter, and, 'twere no great wonder though these bullets should confuse me somewhat in recalling what I do know. Most certainly we never thought you a gipsy like ourselves ; but then I am sure mother never stole you ; she had family enough of her own, and, besides, she brought with her, for your board, she said, a purse with more gold in it than I have seen at one time, either before or since. I remember it kept us all comfortably in the *creature* for a whole twelve-month ; and it wasn't a trifle, Bill, that could do that. You were at first like to die among us. You hadn't been accustomed to sleeping out, or to food such as ours. And, dear me ! how the rags you were dressed in used to annoy

you ; but you soon got over all, Bill, and became the hardest little fellow among us. I once heard my mother say that you were a *love-begot*, and that your father, who was an English gentleman, had to part from both you and your mother on taking a wife. And no more can I tell you, Bill, for the life of me."

We slept that night on the sand, master, and found, in the morning, that the enemy had fallen back some miles nearer Alexandria. Next evening there was a party of us dispatched on some secret service across the desert. Bill was with us ; but the officer under whose special charge we were placed was a Captain Turpic, a nephew of Colonel Westhope, and his heir. But he heired few of his good qualities. He was the son of a pettifogging lawyer, and was as heartily hated by the soldiers as the colonel was beloved. Towards sunset, the party reached a hollow valley in the waste, and there rested, preparatory, as we all intended, for passing the night. Some of us were engaged in erecting temporary huts of branches, some in providing the necessary materials, and we had just formed a snug little camp, and were preparing to light our fires for supper, when we heard a shot not two furlongs away. Bill, who was by far the most active among us, sprung up one of the tallest date-trees, to reconnoitre. But he soon came down again.

"We have lost our pains this time," he said ; "there is a party of French, of fully five times our number, not half a mile away." The captain on the news, wasn't slow, as you may think, in ordering us off ; and, hastily gathering up our blankets, and the contents of our knapsacks, we struck across the sand just as the sun was setting. There is scarce any twilight in Egypt, master ; it is pitch dark twenty minutes after sunset. The first part of the evening, too, is infinitely disagreeable. The days are burning hot, and not a cloud can be seen in the sky ; but no sooner has the sun

gone down, than there comes on a thick white fog, that covers the whole country, so that one can't see fifty yards around; and so icy cold is it, that it strikes a chill to the very heart. It is with these fogs that the dews descend; and deadly things they are. Well, the mist and the darkness came upon us at once; we lost all reckoning; and, after floundering on for an hour or so, among the sandhills, our captain called a halt, and bade us burrow as we best might among the hollows. Hungry as we were, we were fain to leave our supper, to begin the morning with, and huddled all together into what seemed a deep, dry, ditch. We were at first surprised, master, to find an immense heap of stone under us; we couldn't have lain harder had we lain on a Scotch cairn; and that, d'ye see, is unusual in Egypt, where all the sand has been blown by the hot winds from the desert, hundreds of miles away, and where, in the course of a few days' journey, one mayn't see a pebble larger than a pigeon's egg. There were hard, round, bullet-like masses under us, and others of a more oblong shape, like pieces of wood that had been cut for fuel; and, tired as we were, their sharp points, protruding through the sand, kept most of us from sleep. But that was little, master, to what we felt afterwards. As we began to take heat together, there broke out among us a most disagreeable stench; bad, at first, and unlike anything I had ever felt before, but at last altogether overpowering. Some of us became dead sick, and some, to show how much bolder they were than the rest, began to sing. One half the party stole away one by one, and lay down outside; for my own part, master, I thought it was the plague that was breaking out upon us from below, and lay still, in despair of escaping it. I was wretchedly tired, too, and, despite of my fears and the stench, I fell asleep, and slept till daylight. But never before, master, did I see such a sight as when I awoke. We had been sleeping on the carcases of ten thousand Turks,

whom Bonaparty had massacred about a twelvemonth before. There were eyeless skulls grinning at us by hundreds from the side of the ditch, and black, withered hands and feet sticking out, with the white bones glittering between the shrunken sinews. The very sand, for rods around, had a brown iron-like tinge, and seemed baked into a half-solid mass, resembling clay. It was no place to loiter in ; and you may trust me, master, we breakfasted elsewhere. Bill kept close to our captain all that morning ; he didn't much like him, even so early in their acquaintance as this—no one did, in fact ; but he was anxious to learn from him all he could regarding the colonel. He told him, too, something about his own early recollections ; but he would better have kept them to himself. From that hour, master, Captain Turpic never gave him a pleasant look, and sought every means to ruin him.

We joined the army again on the evening of the 20th March. You know, master, what awaited us next morning. I had been marching, on the day of our arrival, for twelve hours, under a very hot sun, and was fatigued enough to sleep soundly. But the dead might have awakened next morning. The enemy broke in upon us about three o'clock. It was pitch dark. I had been dreaming, at the moment, that I was busily engaged in the landing, fighting in the front rank beside Bill, and I awoke to hear the enemy, outside the tent, struggling in fierce conflict with such of my comrades as, half-naked and half-armed, had been roused by the first alarm, and had rushed out to oppose them. You will not think I was long in joining them, master, when I tell you that Bill himself was hardly two steps a-head of me. Colonel Westhope was everywhere at once that morning, bringing his men in the darkness and the confusion, into something like order ; threatening, encouraging, applauding, issuing orders—all in a breath. Just as we got out, the French broke through, beside our

tent, and we saw him struck down in the throng. Bill gave a tremendous cry of ‘Our colonel! our colonel!’ and struck his pike up to the cross into the breast of the fellow who had given the blow. And, hardly had that one fallen, than he sent it crashing through the face of the next foremost, till it lay buried in the brain. The enemy gave back for a moment; and, as he was striking down a third, the colonel got up, badly wounded in the shoulder; but he kept the field all day. He knew Bill the moment he rose, and leant on him till he had somewhat recovered. ‘I shall not forget, Bill,’ he said, ‘that you have saved your colonel’s life.’ We had a fierce struggle, master, ere we beat out the French; but, broken and half-naked as we were, we did beat them out, and the battle became general.

At first, the flare of the artillery, as the batteries blazed out in the darkness, dazzled and blinded me; but I loaded and fired incessantly; and the thicker the bullets went whistling past me, the faster I loaded and fired. A spent shot, that had struck through a sandbank, came rolling on like a bowl, and, leaping up from a hillock in front, struck me on the breast. It was such a blow, master, as a man might have given with his fist; but it knocked me down; and, ere I got up, the company was a few paces in advance. The bonnet of the soldier who had taken my place, came rolling to my feet ere I could join them. But, alas! it was full of blood and brains; and I found that the spent shot had come just in time to save my life. Meanwhile, the battle raged with redoubled fury on the left, and we in the centre had a short respite. And some of us needed it. For my own part, I had fired about a hundred rounds; and my right shoulder was as blue as your waistcoat.

You will wonder, master, how I should notice such a thing in the heat of an engagement; but I remember nothing better than that there was a flock of little birds shrieking and fluttering over our heads for the greater

part of the morning. The poor little things seemed as if robbed of their very instinct by the incessant discharges on every side of them; and, instead of pursuing a direct course, which would soon have carried them clear of us, they kept fluttering in helpless terror in one little spot. About mid-day an *aide-de-camp* went riding by us to the right.

'How goes it? how goes it?' asked one of our officers.

'It is just *who will*,' replied the *aide-de-camp*, and passed by like lightning. Another followed hard after him.

'How goes it now?' inquired the officer.

'Never better, boy!' said the second rider. 'The Forty-Second have cut Bonaparty's Invincibles to pieces, and all the rest of the enemy are falling back!'

We came more into action a little after. The enemy opened a heavy fire on us, and seemed advancing to the charge. I had felt so fatigued, master, during the previous pause, that I could scarcely raise my hand to my head; but, now that we were to be engaged again, all my fatigue left me, and I found myself grown fresh as ever. There were two field-pieces to our left that had done noble execution during the day; and Captain Turpic's company, including Bill and me, were ordered to stand by them in the expected charge. They were wrought mostly by seamen from the vessels—brave, tight fellows, who, like Nelson, never saw fear; but they had been so busy that they had shot away most of their ammunition; and, as we came up to them, they were about despatching a party to the rear for more.

'Right,' said Captain Turpic; 'I don't care though I lend you a hand, and go with you.'

'On your peril, sir!' said Bill Whyte, 'What! leave your company in the moment of the expected charge? I shall assuredly report you for cowardice and desertion of quarters, if you do.'

'And I shall have you broke for mutiny,' said the captain. 'How can these fellows know how to choose their ammunition without some one to direct them?'

And so off he went to the rear, with the sailors; but, though they returned, poor fellows! in ten minutes or so, we saw no more of the captain till evening. On came the French in their last charge. Ere they could close with us, the sailors had fired their field-pieces thrice; and we could see wide avenues opened among them with each discharge. But on they came. Our bayonets crossed and clashed with theirs for one half minute; and, in the next, they were hurled headlong down the declivity, and we were fighting among them pell-mell. There are few troops superior to the French, master, in a first attack; but they want the bottom of the British; and, now that we had broken them in the moment of their onset, they had no chance with us, and we pitched our bayonets into them as if they were so many sheaves in harvest. They lay in some places three and four tier deep—for our blood was up, master,—just as they advanced on us, we had heard of the death of our general; and they neither asked for quarter nor got it. Ah, the good and gallant Sir Ralph! We all felt as if we had lost a father; but he died as the brave best love to die. The field was all our own; and not a Frenchman remained who was not dead or dying. That action, master, fairly broke the neck of their power in Egypt.

Our colonel was severely wounded, as I have told you, early in the morning; but, though often enough urged to retire, he had held out all day, and had issued his orders with all the coolness and decision for which he was so remarkable; but, now that the excitement of the fight was over, his strength failed him at once, and he had to be carried to his tent. He called for Bill, to assist in bearing him off. I believe it was merely that he might

have an opportunity of speaking to him. He told him that, whether he died or lived, he would take care that he should be provided for. He gave Captain Turpic charge, too, that he should keep a warm side to Bill. I overheard our major say to the captain, as we left the tent —‘ Good heavens! did you ever see two men liker one another than the colonel and our new sergeant?’ But the captain carelessly remarked, that the resemblance didn’t strike him.

We met, outside, with a comrade. He had had a cousin in the Forty-Second, he said, who had been killed that morning, and he was anxious to see the body decently buried, and wished us to go along with him. And so we both went. It is nothing, master, to see men struck down in warm blood, and when one’s own blood is up; but oh, ’tis a grievous thing, after one has cooled down to one’s ordinary mood, to go out among the dead and the dying. We passed through what had been the thick of the battle. The slain lay in hundreds and thousands—like the ware and tangle on the shore below us—horribly broken, some of them, by the shot; and blood and brains lay spattered on the sand. But it was a worse sight to see, when some poor wretch, who had no chance of living an hour longer, opened his eyes as we passed, and cried out for water. We soon emptied our canteens, and then had to pass on. In no place did the dead lie thicker than where the Forty-Second had engaged the Invincibles; and never were there finer fellows. They lay piled in heaps—the best men of Scotland over the best men of France—and their wounds, and their number, and the postures in which they lay, showed how tremendous the struggle had been. I saw one gigantic corpse, with the head and neck cloven through the steel cab to the very brisket. It was that of a Frenchman; but the hand that had drawn the blow, lay cold and stiff, not a yard away, with the

broadsword still firm in its grasp. A little farther on, we found the body we sought. It was that of a fair young man ; the features were as composed as if he were asleep ; there was even a smile on the lips ; but a cruel cannon shot had torn the very heart out of the breast. Evening was falling. There was a little dog whining and whimpering over the body, aware, it would seem, that some great ill had beset its master ; but yet tugging, from time to time, at his clothes, that he might rise and come away.

‘Ochon, ochon ! poor Evan M‘Donald !’ exclaimed our comrade ; ‘what would Christy Ross, or your good old mother, say to see you lying here !’

Bill burst out a-crying, as if he had been a child ; and I couldn’t keep dry-eyed neither, master. But grief and pity are weaknesses of the bravest natures. We scooped out a hole in the sand with our bayonets and our hands, and, burying the body, came away.

The battle of the 21st broke, as I have said, the strength of the French in Egypt ; for, though they didn’t surrender to us until about five months after, they kept snug behind their walls, and we saw little more of them. Our colonel had gone aboard of the frigate, desperately ill of his wounds —so ill that it was several times reported he was dead ; and most of our men were suffering sadly from sore eyes ashore. But such of us as escaped, had little to do, and we contrived to wile away the time agreeably enough. Strange country, Egypt, master. You know, our people have come from there ; but, trust me, I could find none of my cousins among either the Turks or the Arabs. The Arabs, master, are quite the gipsies of Egypt : and Bill and I—but he paid dearly for them afterwards, poor fellow —used frequently to visit such of their straggling tribes as came to the neighbourhood of our camp. You, and the like of you, master, are curious to see *our* people, and

how we get on—and no wonder; and we were just as curious to see the Arabs. Toward evening, they used to come in from the shore or the desert, in parties of ten or twelve; and wild-looking fellows they were; tall, but not very tall; thin, and skinny, and dark; and an amazing proportion of them blind of an eye—an effect, I suppose, of the disease from which our comrades were suffering so much. In a party of ten or twelve—and their parties rarely exceeded a dozen—we found that every one of them had some special office to perform. One carried a fishing net, like a herring have; one, perhaps, a basket of fish, newly caught; one a sheaf of wheat; one, a large copper basin, or rather platter; one, a bundle of the dead boughs and leaves of the date tree; one, the implements for lighting a fire; and so on. The first thing they always did, after squatting down in a circle, was to strike a light; the next, to dig a round pot-like hole in the sand, in which they kindle their fire. When the sand has become sufficiently hot, they throw out the embers, and, placing the fish, just as they had caught them, in the bottom of the hole, heaped the hot sand over them, and the fire over that. The sheaf of wheat was next untied, and each taking a handful, held it over the flame till it was sufficiently scorched, and then rubbed out the grain between their hands, into the copper plate. The fire was then drawn off a second time, and the fish dug out, and, after rubbing off the sand, and taking out the bowels, they sat down to supper. And such, master, was the ordinary economy of the poorer tribes, that seemed drawn to the camp merely by curiosity. Some of the others brought fruit and vegetables to our market, and were much encouraged by our officers; but a set of greater rascals never breathed. At first, several of our men got flogged through them. They had a trick of raising a hideous outcry in the market place for every trifle—certain, d'ye see, of attracting the notice

of some of our officers, who were all sure to take part with them. The market, master, had to be encouraged, at all events ; and it was some time ere the tricks of the rascals were understood in the proper quarter. But, to make short, Bill and I went out one morning to our walk. We had just heard—and heavy news it was to the whole regiment—that our colonel was despaired of, and had no chance of seeing out the day. Bill was in miserably low spirits. Captain Turpic had insulted him most grossly that morning. So long as the colonel had been expected to recover, he had shown him some degree of civility ; but he now took every opportunity of picking a quarrel with him. There was no comparison in battle, master, between Bill and the captain ; for the captain, I suspect, was little better than a coward ; but, then, there was just as little on parade the other way ; for Bill, you know, couldn't know a great deal, and the captain was a perfect martinet. He had called him vagrant and beggar, master, for omitting some little piece of duty ; now, he couldn't help having been with *us*, you know ; and, as for beggary, he had never begged in his life. Well, we had walked out towards the market, as I say.

‘ It's all nonsense, Jack,’ says he, ‘ to be so dull on the matter ; I'll e'en treat you to some fruit. I have a Sicilian dollar here. See that lazy fellow with the spade lying in front, and the burning mountain smoking behind him ; we must see if he can't dig out for us a few *prans'* worth of dates.

Well, master, up he went to a tall, thin, rascally-looking Arab, with one eye, and bought as much fruit from him as might come to one-tenth of the dollar which he gave him, and then held out his hand for the change. But there was no change forthcoming. Bill wasn't a man to be done out of his cash in that silly way, and so he stormed at the rascal ; but he, in turn, stormed as furiously, in his

own lingo, at him, till at last Bill's blood got up, and, seizing him by the breast, he twisted him over his knee, as one might a boy of ten years or so. The fellow raised a hideous outcry, as if Bill were robbing and murdering him. Two officers, who chanced to be in the market at the time, came running up at the noise; one of them was the scoundrel Turpic; and Bill was laid hold of, and sent off under guard to the camp. Poor fellow! he got scant justice there. Turpic had procured a man-of-war's man, who swore, as he well might, indeed, that Bill was the smuggler who had swamped the Kirkcudbright custom-house boat. There was another brought forward, who swore that both of us were gipsies, and told a blasted rigmarole story, without one word of truth in it, about the stealing of a silver spoon. The Arab had his story, too, in his own lingo; and they received every word of it; for my evidence went for nothing. I was of a race who never spoke the truth, they said—as if I weren't as good as a Mahomedan Arab. To crown all, in came Turpic's story, about what he called Bill's mutinous spirit in the action of the 21st. You may guess the rest, master. The poor fellow was broke that morning, and told that, were it not in consideration of his bravery, he would have got a flogging into the bargain.

I spent the evening of that day with Bill, outside the camp, and we ate the dates together, that in the morning had cost him so dear. The report had gone abroad—luckily a false one—that our colonel was dead; and that put an end to all hope, with the poor fellow, of having his case righted. We spoke together for, I am sure, two hours—spoke of Bill's early recollections, and of the hardship of his fate all along. And it was now worse with him, he said, than it had ever been before. He spoke of the strange, unaccountable hostility of Turpic; and I saw his brow grow dark, and the veins of his neck swell

almost to bursting. He trusted they might yet meet, he said, where there would be none to note who was the officer and who the private soldier. I did my best, master, to console the poor fellow, and we parted. The first thing I saw as I opened the tent door next morning, was Captain Turpic, brought into the camp by the soldier whose cousin Bill and I had assisted to bury. The captain was leaning on his shoulder, somewhat less than half alive, as it seemed, with four of his front teeth struck out, and a stream of blood all along his vest and small clothes. He had been met with by Bill, who had attacked him, he said, and, after breaking his sword, would have killed him, had not the soldier come up and interfered. But that, master, was the captain's story. The soldier told me, afterwards, that he saw the captain draw his sword ere Bill lifted hand at all; and that, when the poor fellow did strike, he gave him only one knock-down blow on the mouth, that laid him insensible at his feet; and that, when down, though he might have killed him twenty times over, he didn't so much as crook a finger on him. Nay, more; Bill offered to deliver himself up to the soldier, had not the latter assured him that he would to a certainty be shot, and advised him to make off. There was a party dispatched in quest of him, master, the moment Turpic had told his story; but he was lucky enough, poor fellow, to elude them; and they returned in the evening, just as they had gone out. And I saw no more of Bill in Egypt, master.

Never had troops less to do than we had, for the six months or so we afterwards remained in the country; and time hung wretchedly on the hands of some of us. Now that Bill was gone, I had no comrade with whom I cared to associate; and, as you may think, I often didn't know what to do with myself. After all our fears and regrets, master, our colonel recovered, and, one morning, about four months after the action, came ashore to see us. We

were sadly pestered with flies, master. I have seen, I am sure, a bushel of them on the top of our tent at once. They buzzed all night by millions round our noses, and many a plan did we think of to get rid of them ; but, after destroying hosts on hosts they still seemed as thick as before. I had fallen on a new scheme this morning. I placed some sugar on a board, and surrounded it with gunpowder ; and, when the flies had settled by thousands on the sugar, I fired the powder by means of a train, and the whole fell dead on the floor of the tent. I had just got a capital shot, when up came the colonel, and sat down beside me.

‘I wish to know,’ he said, ‘all you can tell me about Bill Whyte ; you were his chief friend and companion, I have heard, and are acquainted with his early history. Can you tell me ought of his parentage.

‘Nothing of that, colonel,’ I said ; ‘and yet I have known Bill almost ever since he knew himself.’

And so, master, I told him all that I knew ; how Bill had been first taken to us by my mother ; of the purse of gold she had brought with her, which had kept us all so merry ; and of the noble spirit he had shown among us when he grew up. I told him, too, of some of Bill’s early recollections ; of the scarlet dress trimmed with silver, which had been brought to his mind by the sergeant’s coat the first day he wore it ; of the gentleman and lady, too, whom he remembered to have lived with ; and of the supposed resemblance he had found between the former and the colonel. The colonel, as I went on, was strangely agitated, master. He held an open letter in his hand, and seemed, every now and then, to be comparing particulars ; and, when I mentioned Bill’s supposed recognition of him, he actually started from off his seat.

‘Good Heavens !’ he exclaimed, ‘why was I not brought acquainted with this before ?’

I explained the why, master, and told him all about Captain Turpic ; and he left me with, you may be sure, no very favourable opinion of the captain. But I must now tell you, master, a part of my story which I had but from hearsay.

The colonel had been getting over the worse effects of his wound, when he received a letter from a friend in England, informing him that his brother-in-law, the father of Captain Turpic, had died suddenly, and that his sister, who, to all appearance was fast following, had been making strange discoveries regarding an only son of the colonel's, who was supposed to have been drowned about seventeen years before. The colonel had lost both his lady and child by a frightful accident. His estate lay near Olney, on the banks of the Ouse ; and the lady, one day, during the absence of the colonel, who was in London, was taking an airing in the carriage with her son, a boy of three years or so, when the horses took fright, and, throwing the coachman, who was killed on the spot, rushed into the river. The Ouse is a deep, sluggish stream, dark and muddy in some of the more dangerous pools, and mantled over with weeds. It was into one of these the carriage was overturned ; assistance came too late, and the unfortunate lady was brought out, a corpse ; but the body of the child was nowhere to be found. It now came out, however, from the letter, that the child had been picked up, unhurt, by the colonel's brother-in-law, who, after concealing it for nearly a week, during the very frenzy of the colonel's distress, had then given it to a gipsy. The rascal's only motive—he was a lawyer, master—was that his own son, the captain, who was then a boy of twelve years or so, and not wholly ignorant of the circumstance, might succeed to the colonel's estate. The writer of the letter added that, on coming to the knowledge of the singular confession, he had made instant search after the gipsy to whom the child

had been given, and had been fortunate enough to find her, after tracing her over half the kingdom, in a cave, near Fortrose, in the north of Scotland. She had confessed all ; stating, however, that the lad, who had borne among the tribe the name of Bill Whyte, and had turned out a fine fellow, had been outlawed, for some smuggling feat, about eighteen months before, and had enlisted, with a young man, her son, into a regiment bound for Egypt. You see, master, there couldn't be a shadow of doubt that my comrade, Bill Whyte, was just Henry Westhope, the colonel's son and heir. But the grand matter was where to find him. Search as we might, all search was in vain ; we could trace him no further than outside the camp, to where he had met with Captain Turpic. I should tell you, by the way, that the captain was now sent to Coventry, by every one, and that not an officer in the regiment would return his salute.

Well, master, the months passed, and at length the French surrendered ; and, having no more to do in Egypt, we all re-embarked, and sailed for England. The short peace had been ratified before our arrival ; and I, who had become heartily tired of the life of a soldier, now that I had no one to associate with, was fortunate enough to obtain my discharge. The colonel retired from the service at the same time. He was as kind to me as if he had been my father, and offered to make me his forester, if I would but come and live beside him ; but I was too fond of a wandering life for that. He was corresponding, he told me, with every British consul within fifteen hundred miles of the Nile ; but he had heard nothing of Bill, master. Well, after seeing the colonel's estate, I parted from him, and came north, to find out my people, which I soon did ; and, for a year or so, I lived with them just as I have been doing since. I was led, in the course of my wanderings, to Leith, and was standing, one morning, on the pier.

among a crowd of people, who had gathered round to see a fine vessel from the Levant, that was coming in at the time, when my eye caught among the sailors a man exceedingly like Bill. He was as tall, and even more robust, and he wrought with all Bill's activity; but, for some time, I could not catch a glimpse of his face. At length, however, he turned round, and there, sure enough, was Bill himself. I was afraid to hail him, master, not knowing who among the crowd might also know him, and know him also as a deserter or an outlaw; but you may be sure I wasn't long in leaping aboard and making up to him. And we were soon as happy, master, in one of the cellars of the Coal-hill, as we had been in all our lives before.

Bill told me his history since our parting. He had left the captain lying at his feet, and struck across the sand, in the direction of the Nile, one of the mouths of which he reached next day. He there found some Greek sailors, who were employed in watering; and, assisting them in their work, he was brought aboard their vessel, and engaged as a seaman by the master, who had lost some of his crew by the plague. As you may think, master, he soon became a prime sailor, and continued with the Greeks, trading among the islands of the Archipelago, for about eighteen months, when, growing tired of the service, and meeting with an English vessel, he had taken a passage home. I told him how much ado we had all had about him after he had left us, and how we were to call him Bill Whyte no longer. And so, in short, master, we set out together for Colonel Westhope's.

In our journey, we met with some of our people on a wild moor of Cumberland, and were invited to pass the night with them. They were of the Curlit family; but you will hardly know them as that. Two of them had been with us when Bill swamped the custom-house boat. They were fierce, desperate fellows, and not much to be

trusted by their friends even ; and I was afraid that they might have somehow come to guess that Bill had brought some clinkers home with him. And so, master, I would fain have dissuaded him from making any stay with them in the night time ; for I did not know, you see, in what case we might find our *weasands* in the morning ; but Bill had no fears of any kind, and was, besides, desirous to spend one last night with the gipsies ; and so he stayed. The party had taken up their quarters in a waste house on the moor, with no other human dwelling within four miles of it. There was a low, stunted wood on the one side, master, and a rough, sweeping stream on the other : the night, too, was wild and boisterous ; and, what between suspicion and discomfort, I felt well nigh as drearily as I did when lying among the dead men in Egypt. We were nobly treated, however, and the whisky flowed like water, but we drank no more than was good for us. Indeed, Bill was never a great drinker ; and I kept on my guard, and refused the liquor, on the plea of a bad head. I should have told you that there were but three of the Curlits—all of them raw-boned fellows, however, and all of them of such stamp that the three have since been hung. I saw they were sounding Bill ; but he seemed aware of them.

‘Ay, ay,’ said he, ‘I have made something by my voyaging, lads, though, mayhap, not a great deal. What think you of that there now, for instance?’—drawing, as he spoke, a silver-mounted pistol out of each pocket—‘these are pretty pops, and as good as they are pretty; the worst of them sends a bullet through an inch board at twenty yards.’

‘Are they loaded, Bill ?’ asked Tom Curlit.

‘To be sure,’ said Bill, returning them again, each to its own pouch. ‘What is the use of an empty pistol ?’

‘Ah,’ replied Tom, ‘I smell a rat, Bill. You have given

over making war on the king's account, and have taken the road to make war on your own. Bold enough, to be sure.'

From the moment they saw the pistols, the brothers seemed to have changed their plan regarding us—for some plan I am certain they had. They would now fain have taken us into partnership with them ; but their trade was a woudny bad one, master, with a world more of risk than profit.

'Why lads,' said Tom Curlit to Bill and me, 'hadn't you better stay with us altogether ? The road won't do in these days at all. No, no, the law is a vast deal over strong for that ; and you will be tucked up like dogs for your very first affair. But, if you stay with us, you will get on in a much quieter way on this wild moor here. Plenty of game, Bill ; and, sometimes, when the nights are long, we contrive to take a purse with as little trouble as may be. We had an old pedlar, only three weeks ago, that brought us sixty good pounds.—By the way, brothers, we must throw a few more sods over him, for I nosed him this morning as I went by.—And, lads, we have something in hand just now that, with to be sure a little more risk, will pay better still. Two hundred yellow boys in hand, and five hundred more when our work is done. Better that, Bill, than standing to be shot at, for a shilling per day.'

'Two hundred in hand, and five hundred more when you have done your work !' exclaimed Bill. 'Why, that is sure enough princely pay, unless the work be very bad indeed. But, come, tell us what you propose. You can't expect us to make it a leap in the dark matter.'

'The work is certainly a little dangerous,' said Tom, 'and we of ourselves are rather few ; but, if you both join with us, there would be a vast deal less of danger indeed. The matter is just this. A young fellow, like ourselves,

has a rich old uncle, who has made his will in his favour; but then he threatens to make another will that won't be so favourable to him by half; and you see the drawing across of a knife—so—would keep the first one in force. And that is all we have to do before pocketing the blunt. But, then, the old fellow is as brave as a lion; and there are two servants with him, worn-out soldiers like himself, that would, I am sure, be rough customers. With your help, however, we shall get on primely. The old boy's house stands much alone; and we shall be five to three.'

'Well, well,' said Bill, 'we shall give your proposal a night's thought, and tell you what we think of it in the morning. But, remember, no tricks, Tom! If we engage in the work, we must go share and share alike in the booty.'

'To be sure,' said Tom; and so the conversation closed.

About eight o'clock, or so, master, I stepped out to the door. The night was dark and boisterous as ever, and there had come on a heavy rain. But I could see that, dark and boisterous as it was, some one was approaching the house with a dark lantern. I lost no time in telling the Curlits so.

'It must be the captain,' said they; 'though it seems strange that he should come here to-night. You must away, Jack and Bill, to the loft, for it mayn't do for the captain to find you here; but you can lend us a hand afterwards, should need require it.'

There was no time for asking explanations, master; and so up we climbed to the loft, and had got snugly concealed among some old hay, when in came the captain. But what captain, think you? Why, just our old acquaintance, Captain Turpic!

'Lads,' he said to the Curlits, 'make yourselves ready; get your pistols. Our old scheme is blown; for the colonel has left his house at Olney, on a journey to Scotland; but

he passes here to-night, and you must find means to stop him—now or never!'

'What force and what arms has he with him, captain?' asked Tom.

'The coachman, his body servant, and himself,' said the captain; 'but only the servant and himself are armed. The stream outside is high to-night; you must take them just as they are crossing it, and thinking of only the water; and, whatever else you may mind, make sure of the colonel.'

'Sure as I live,' said Bill to me, in a low whisper, "'tis a plan to murder Colonel Westhope! And, good Heavens!' he continued, pointing through an opening in the gable, 'yonder is his carriage, not a mile away. You may see the lanterns, like two fiery eyes, coming sweeping along the moor. We have no time to lose; let us slide down through the opening, and meet with it.'

As soon done as said, master; we slid down along the turf gable, crossed the stream, which had risen high on its banks, by a plank bridge for foot passengers, and then dashed along the broken road in the direction of the carriage. We came up to it, as it was slowly crossing an open drain.

'Colonel Westhope!' I cried, 'Colonel Westhope!—stop! stop!—turn back! You are waylaid by a party of ruffians, who will murder you if you go on.'

The door opened and the colonel stepped out, with his sword under his left arm, and a cocked pistol in his hand.

'Is not that Jack Whyte?' he asked.

'The same, noble colonel,' I said; 'and here is Henry, your son.'

It was no place or time, master, for long explanations; there was one hearty congratulation, and one hurried embrace; and the colonel, after learning from Bill the number of the assailants, and the plan of the attack, ordered

the carriage to drive on slowly before, and followed, with us and his servant, on foot, behind.

'The rascals,' he said, 'will be so dazzled with the flare of the lanterns in front, that we will escape notice till they have fired, and then we shall have them for the picking down.'

And so it was, master. Just as the carriage was entering the stream, the coachman was pulled down by Tom Curlit; at the same instant, three bullets went whizzing through the glasses, and two fellows came leaping out from behind some furze to the carriage door. A third, whom I knew to be the captain, lagged behind. I marked him, however; and when the colonel and Bill were disposing of the other two—and they took them so sadly by surprise, master, that they had but little difficulty in throwing them down, and binding them—I was lucky enough to send a piece of lead through the captain. He ran about twenty yards, and then dropped down, stone dead. Tom escaped us; but he cut a throat some months after, and suffered for it at Carlisle. And his two brothers, after making a clean breast, and confessing all, were transported for life. But they found means to return in a few years after, and were both hung on the gallows on which Tom had suffered before them.

I have not a great deal more to tell you, master. The colonel has been dead for the last twelve years, and his son has succeeded him in his estate. There is not a completer gentleman in England than Henry Westhope, master, nor a finer fellow. I call on him every time I go round, and never miss a hearty welcome; though, by the by, I am quite as sure of a hearty scold. He still keeps a snug little house empty for me, and offers to settle on me fifty pounds a-year, whenever I choose to give up my wandering life, and go and live with him. But what's bred in the bone won't come out of the flesh, master, and I have

not yet closed with his offer. And, really, to tell you my mind, I don't think it quite respectable. Here I am, at present, a free, independent tinker—no man more respectable than a tinker, master—all allow that; whereas, if I go and live with Bill, on an unwrought-for fifty pounds a-year, I will be hardly better than a mere master tailor or shoemaker. No, no, that would never do! Nothing like respectability, master, let a man fare as hard as he may."

I thanked the gipsy for his story, and told him I thought it almost worth while putting it in print. He thanked me, in turn, for liking it so well, and assured me I was quite at liberty to put it in print as soon as I choose. And so I took him at his word.

"But yonder," said he, "is the moon rising, red and huge over the three tops of Belrinnes, and throwing, as it brightens, its long strip of fire across the Frith. Take care of your footing, just as you reach the top of the crag; there is an awkward gap there on the rock edge that reminds me of an Indian trap; but, as for the rest of the path, you will find it quite as safe as by day. Good-by!"

I left him, and made the best of my way home; where, while the facts were fresh in my mind, I committed to paper (for the express purpose of having it inserted among the Border Tales) the gipsy's story.

THE PROFESSOR'S TALES.

THE LAST OF THE PEDLARS.

"Atlas was so exceeding strong,
He bore the skies upon his back,
Just as a pedlar does his pack."—SWIFT.

THE whole framework of society has been so much altered within these last sixty years, that a person who has been born within that period, unless from tradition, must remain entirely ignorant of the manners and habits of his immediate predecessors. *Now*, highroads, carriages by land and water, with all manner of facilities of intercourse, have brought every part of the country, even the most remote corners, into contact, as it were, with every other part. Any great or engrossing fact or feeling flies immediately, on wings of paper, and in characters of ink, from land's-end to land's-end. But, formerly, this was very far from being the case. The press, as a vehicle of public news, was altogether in its infancy. Roads *were* not, or they were all *but* impassable; and the one end of the island might be sunk into the sea, without the other extremity having any immediate perception of the loss. But we must not conclude, on this account, that our forefathers were without curiosity, or without the means of gratifying that passion for news which is deeply seated in our nature. Not at all; the very inconveniences of their position produced, in a great measure, the means of reciprocal intelligence.

There were the tailor and the trogger, but, above and beyond all, the pedlar, the most respected and interesting of all walking and migrating gazettes, who, in the non-

existence of woollen-drappers and haberdashers, nailed, like bad silver, to a locality, wandered from Dan to Beersheba—in other words, from Glasgow to Manchester, and *vice versa*—carrying all manner of fashionable clothing on their backs, and a vast assortment of fore-night gabble in their heads. As these itinerant merchants behoved to be young and strong, so they were generally unmarried, and kept up a kind of running fire with the lasses. Their opportunities of observing the characteristics of the farmer's fireside were unbounded, as they not unfrequently remained stationary for two or three days in one place. After several years of laborious travel, and enormous profits, at little or no expense in point of diet, such individuals generally purchased a stout horse, to carry the increased load of goods. The horse, again, was ultimately attached to a waggon, and the waggon, at last, stuck in the midst of some flourishing village or town, and became a regular haberdashery shop. Thus, through industry, all but dishonest parsimony, prudence, and perseverance, a comfortable independence often crowned the old age of the packman; and he was not unfrequently found with a fishing-rod by the mountain-stream, or with a book in the corner of his snug little garden, towards the close of his varied and eventful history. It was but the other day that we attended the sale of an old bachelor of this description—the last, we believe, of the race—and that, amidst a parcel of old books and papers, which we purchased *en masse*, we discovered a well written and somewhat extended manuscript, from which we intend to cull a few chapters for the amusement of our readers.

C H A P T E R I.

It is now upwards of sixty years (says the packman) since I first took yard-wand in hand, and pack on back, ad-

dicting myself to much pedestrian travel, with the view of supplying dames with needles and shears, maidens with shawls and Bibles, and servant lads with watch-chains and waistcoat pieces. Having, at last, and after many wanderings and much converse with men, women, and children—not to mention dogs, which, in the hill-country, are numerous and noisy—having, I say, at last reached, as it were, a port or haven of rest, I sit here in my arm chair, with old Ponto on one side, and my not less faithful friend, the schoolmaster, on the other, keeping a calm look out over the ocean upon which I have been tossed, and recalling, as well as endeavouring in the best way I can to narrate, the somewhat varied incidents of my past life.

It is quite true that I was never properly bred for any profession, but was simply educated in the reading of English, and in the keeping of accounts, and may, therefore, be supposed to be very unfit for anything like grand composition, or style of language; but in case this narrative should, by any accident, as they say, *see the light*, I must premise that I am possessed of advantages of which the reader, till I inform him, cannot possibly be apprised. I have the benefit of my friend the schoolmaster's strictures; of which, however, I shall only avail myself, in regard to the language, and that merely when I am fairly convinced that he is right and that I am wrong. With the wording of this very last sentence, Dominie Tawse finds fault, and insists upon it, that there is, I think he calls it, a “pleonasm” in it; but of this he has failed to convince me, and I therefore suffer the sentence to stand as it was originally written. In fact, I have a great respect for my good friend, the Dominie's opinions, in most occasions, but really, in regard to composition, his taste has been perverted by certain rules and regulations, to which he gives very hard names, and to which, in my opinion, he sacrifices both ease and sense.

I pass over the history of my early days. Were I to enter upon them, I should write a volume, and still have volumes to write; for I was born in a mountain glen, beside a mountain stream—my father being a shepherd—and where I grew insensibly into an affectionate friendship for everything around me; for my dear and indulgent mother; for my douce and sagacious father; for our two dogs, Help and Watch; for the old grey cat; for all manner of wooden trenchers, spoons, and ladles; for the stream that wended past the byre-end; for every fin that shoot across the pool; for the sheep bleating upon the brae and glen; for the glen and brae themselves; for the mist, the clouds, the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars—which all seemed made for and subservient to us, and us alone. I pass over the killing of my first trout, with a crooked pin, my novitiate in fishing, and my amazing progress and success in after years; but I cannot pass over a song, which, in these my days of youthful glee, I laboured into something like the tune, I think, of “Blue Bonnets over the Border:”—

“ Oh, would you wish to gang to the fishing, lad—
 Ye maun get up in the morning sae early,
 Wi’ step like the roe-deer, and blythe heart and glad,
 And tackle in order, to start to it fairly.
 Away! while the sleepers around you are dreaming,
 Away! while the grey eye of morning is beaming,
 Ere the mist leaves the mountain,
 The wild duck the fountain,
 Or the pure light of day o’er the world is streaming.

“ Gang down by the glen where the burnie rows gently,
 When the light western breeze the stream ripples over;
 By the deep eddied pools, where, silent and tently,
 The trout keep his watch, ‘neath the willowed bank’s cover.
 And there, with the fly, where the water winds slowly,
 Neatly and clean throw it out just below you;
 Watch for him steadily,
 Strike at him readily.
 And run him till, faint, on the sward he lies lowly.

"With the well-seasoned bait in the streams that are fleetest,
 Fish the large yellow fellows, two pounders or more ;
 You are sure of a tune to the fisher's ear sweetest,
 For the sound of the pirl is all music before.
 He comes with a boil, like a deep caldron gasping,
 So sudden and keenly the tempting bait grasping—
 Hark to him dashing !
 See to him splashing !
 Now he pants on the green, and your hand cannot clasp him."

I pass over, likewise, the mournful recollection of my worthy father's death. He was swept away in an avalanche, which, on the melting of the snow, detached itself from the mountain's brow. He and Help perished together. Oh, I remember, as it were but yesterday, Watch's look when he entered the house, and all but told us in words what had happened. But what avail such recollections? My father was dead, and, in a few hours, my mother followed him; she was seized prematurely with her pains, and, ere assistance could be procured, there was a dead mother and a still-born child. I wonder yet that I kept my senses; but I was stupified. My uncle, a gruff and worldly-minded, but shrewd carle, arranged and managed everything, and took me home with him, the day after the double funeral.

My mother's brother—with whom I now lived, and by whom I was educated, in the town of Moffat, Dumfries-shire—had made a respectable independence as a pack-man; and having only one son, and being a widower, he found no great inconvenience in accommodating me. His son was grown up; and, having a natural taste for a sea-faring life, he was, soon after my arrival, placed as middy on board of an East Indiaman; so my uncle and I had the whole house to ourselves. But my uncle's temper was bad; and there was that in his manner to me, which seemed ever and anon to say—You are devilishly in my road, I wish I were quit of you. Accordingly, being now

a pretty well-educated lad of seventeen, I cast about in my own mind for a profession, or some way or other of supporting myself, independent of my snarling relative. Jamaica, I remember, was thought of, and I even had some pairs of shoes made for the voyage ; but the person died on whose patronage my uncle relied, and the scheme luckily blew up. I wrote a good hand, and was quite master of book-keeping, both by single and double entry ; so I was put to a writer's desk in Dumfries, with many admonitions, and much wise instruction. But I had been accustomed to the hills and streams, and fishing, and all the varieties of an active life ; and so, one fine evening, I went out to walk on the banks of the Nith, but forgot to return to my desk next morning. In fact, I had returned to Moffat, telling my uncle that I was tired of sitting, and would rather, like himself, carry a pack. At this he seemed at first somewhat startled ; but, finding me resolute, he at last consented, and agreed to furnish me with credit to the amount of £20 sterling. A suitable box was accordingly purchased, and a somewhat limited assortment of penknives, watch-seals, scissors, thimbles, needles, pins, brooches, Bibles, and Psalm-books, with a small assortment of shawls, waistcoat pieces, and Kilmarnock night-caps, &c., were selected and packed up ; and the following morning was fixed upon for my departure, when my uncle requested my company for a little in his own small sitting room, off the kitchen.

" You are about," said my uncle, " to enter upon a profession, the profits of which, if rated according to shop regulations, would be altogether inadequate to the recompence of your risk and trouble ; you must, therefore, effect an 'assurance,' as it were, by disposing of every article at the highest price you can possibly obtain. Ask, if you mean to secure a reasonable and a remunerating profit, at least double the prime or original cost ; and thus you

can afford to be prigged, or beat down from penny to penny, till you all but swear that the purchaser has the article below prime cost. In all your travels, never lodge at an inn or public house. One single instance of this, well authenticated, would ruin your trade for ever; for every lad and lass, every guidman and guidwife, would infallibly conclude, that, if you could afford such expensive accommodation, it must undoubtedly be at their cost—it must be exacted from the ribbons, shawls, gown and waist-coat pieces, with which you supply them. You must, therefore, fix, as soon as may be, upon your points or stations of regulated half-yearly or yearly calls; and this is undoubtedly one of the nicest and most delicate points of your profession, and must be managed, not so much on any general principle, as by a reference to character and circumstance. There are, undoubtedly, many farm-houses, from which the sooner that you depart, and relieve the dogs of their clamour, the better. But this is not their universal or even general character. Whenever you find the guidwife couthy and heartsome, the guidman gruff, and frank, and honest, and the daughters young and buxom, there deposit your pack on Saturday night, and if greatly pressed, do not lift it again till Tuesday or Wednesday morning. Monday or Tuesday, if you are up to your trade, can be advantageously employed in exhibiting, bit by bit, and at intervals, the wonders of the pack; in retailing, with a corresponding parsimony, your country and city news; and in disposing of as many articles on trust (for you must never deal for ready money only), as may entitle you to announce your return with new patterns and fashions that day six or twelve months. To the sheep or stock-farmer in particular, your periodical visits will be the welcomest: for, as he lies at a distance from shops or cities, his wants will be numerous, and his knowledge of the market price imperfect in proportion. To him, too,

you can render yourself useful on various occasions. At speaning and smearing time, in particular, you can lend him a lift ; for you must never grudge a little labour of this sort, to secure you a good market, and a welcome back again. There is a way, too, of gratifying your customers, and of benefiting at the same time yourself, which you would do well to observe: Whenever occasion may offer, your maxim is to please them on the spot, and without delay ; for delays in purchasers, like those in other matters, are dangerous. Your pack is exposed, and every eye is turned intently upon its many attractions. The farmer's daughter is mightily pleased with a particular pattern, but wishes it more of a superior quality. The only test, however, which your inexperienced customer has of quality, is *price*. You have asked, I shall suppose, five shillings, which may be about double its value, for this pattern ; but it will not do—a finer article is wanted. You immediately recollect that you actually have such an article somewhere else, and bustle over you goods in great seeming confusion. At last, up the pattern turns ; but the price is high—in fact, you did not mean to part with it, as it was in a manner bespoke by an old customer. Thus, the *very identical* shawl is disposed of at double the price, and your customer is obliged at the same time. The neat performance of this allowable imposition, requires, however, some previous practice, so that no suspicion may, in any case, attach to you.

"Never," continued my uncle, after inhaling his usual large allowance of snuff—"never neglect golden opportunities, or favourable occasions. A death is one of those most propitious occurrences ; and, if it take place suddenly, and in one of your 'starting families,' so much the better. Hasten forward, or backward, (as may suit your purpose, on such occasions), with all possible dispatch.

Night and day you must continue your travel towards the house of mourning, and, after suitable inquiries and condolences, which must never be overtaxed, you may, as it were incidentally, mention that, by the most strange coincidence, your present stock of mourning articles is full and good. A whole black suit for the guidman, or a gown, at least, and ribbons for the mistress, will yield a profit more than equal to console your grief, and reconcile you to the behests of Providence.

“The lassie, again, who is thinking of marriage, will easily be recognised by her bashful look and embarrassed manner. You will soon learn to observe the great approaching event, in a laughing eye and an excited demeanour—

“Coming events cast their shadows before;”

and, under the advanced shadow of this coming event, you will be able to spread out your pack to some purpose. Whatever of head-gear, ribbon, or lace, flutters in the wind, adorns the countenance, or borders a dress gown, you will be ready to afford, at prices greatly reduced since last season. Bridegrooms, too, make presents ; and for this purpose you must have neat-bound Bibles, gilt Psalm-books, and Boston’s “Fourfold State.” Marriages have a natural tendency towards, and connexion with christenings ; and you will be a lame calculator if you cannot make it your business to be present on these occasions, with such dresses as infancy, thus circumstanced, is known to require.

“Fairs, too, and markets, are never beneath your notice : not that I would advise you to attend indiscriminately such public resorts. There is danger in this ; for if, whilst selling, as you would be compelled to do, your goods at a fair market price, some of your muirland customers should observe it, your private and more lucrative trade would be endangered ; but, in markets sufficiently remote from your ordinary route, no such consequences are to be appre-

hended, and there you may occasionlly get rid of some old and rather unsaleable stock.

"One of the most important secrets of the trade is, the recovery of bad debts; for, however delighted your customers may be with their fine new fashionable articles when they are purchased, the day of payment is always an unwelcome day.

"So comes the reckoning, when the banquet's o'er,
The awful reckoning, and men smile no more."

"Servants, too, frequently change their service, and you will often have great difficulty in tracing them out. In every instance, almost, some particular procedure must be resorted to. In one case, you may succeed by threats, and by pretending to read a warrant of apprehension; in another, a little flattery may not be amiss, particularly with the fair sex. 'It is, indeed, a pity that the price is not forthcoming: for you never saw *her* look so handsome as she did in the still unpaid article. Could she only manage the one-half now, you would take her acknowledgment for the other half, next time you came about,' &c. &c. In desperate cases, desperate measures must be resorted to. For example," continued my knowing instructor, "I'll tell you how I once recovered thirty shillings, which I had fully given up as lost.

"There was a servant lass, in the parish of Penpont, who had the hardilhood not only to refuse me payment, but actually to aver that she owed me not a farthing, that she had already paid me, and would not pay me twice over. True, she had no receipt for the money; but then I was in the habit of receiving money without giving or being asked for any receipt whatever. What was to be done? There had been no witnesses of the transaction. Was I to sit quietly down, not only under the loss, but under the suspicion that I was capable of charging twice

for the same purchase? I, at last, after much meditation, devised and carried into effect the following method of recovery. I shut myself up in a room, in the village of Penpont, for a day or two, and took care to have it noised abroad, by means of a boy whom I had bribed into the secret, first, that I had been taken suddenly and extremely ill, and lastly, that I had died. This report I took particular care to have conveyed to the ears of my fair debtor. She resided about two miles from the village. In a day or two, my messenger repaired to the lady, averring that I had left him, being a near relative, my heir, and that he had found a debt due by her in my books, which debt he requested her to liquidate incontinent. To this proposal Tibby opposed words and actions of the most disdainful and reproachful character, calling my agent many bad names, and at last setting him to the door by actual violence. In the meantime, knowing what was likely to occur, I hove in sight, at the further extremity of a grass field, in full uniform, with my well-known pack on my back, and my yard-wand in my hand.

“‘Aweel,’ says Sandy, “‘if ye winna pay, I canna help it; but there *he’s* coming to speak to you *himsel.* So ye can e’en settle the business atwixt ye.’

“‘The Lord forbid!’ exclaimed Tibby, looking towards my approach, with staring eyes, and limbs trembling like an aspen leaf—‘The Lord Almighty forbid, Sandy! Come here! come here! Wait a moment till I get the key of my trunk! Here, here! there’s the money, every shilling, and see ye letna the awfu’ dead creature come ony nearer us.’

“And thus I recovered my just debt, and afforded a source of much good-humoured merriment to the neighbourhood for many days afterwards.”

CHAPTER II.

It was on a fine morning in the latter end of the month of October, that I took yard-wand in hand, and pack on back for the first time. The sun shone slanting and sweetly over wood, and vale, and hill-side; and the light and airy gossamer (at this season *only* visible) lay in gleaming and floating lines, over grass fields and ploughed lands. I bent my way to the mountains, well knowing that there, at a distance from shop or market, I should most likely meet with a sale for my goods, and should, at the same time, fix the prices, without fear of check or detection. By the time that I had reached Locherben, the sun had set, and the twilight was still lingering on the tops of the twin Queensberries. The herds were coming in from the hills; the guidman was steeking some yetts in the inclosure of the in-fields; and the guidwife, with some half-a-dozen servant lasses, were busily employed in domestic arrangements. Dogs were everywhere to be seen, meeting in unity, or snarling defiance over some contested pot from which they were extracting a rather scanty meal. I leaned my pack on a fail or turf dike, which enclosed a few ill-thriven cabbages, and waited patiently an invitation from some chance inmate to enter. At last, a canny lass came out, with a tub full of sheeps entrails, which she proceeded to cleanse and scour in the passing stream. She took up her station near to where I leaned, and, blithely singing the while, proceeded, with kilted coats, and sleeves tucked up to the shoulders, to perform her work. Having cast a random glance around her, she immediately perceived that she was not alone—and, without any feeling or appearance of embarrassment, immediately proceeded to address me—

“ And what are *you*, sitting there, like a craw in the

mist? and what's that lying behint you, man?—Losh preserve us! hae ye gotten a coffin on yer back, or are ye just a kintra lad, gain hame wi' yer sister's kist on yer shoulders?—Speak, body, speak this minute, or I'll come alang yer chafts wi' a nievefu o' thairms!”—Thus saying, she actually left the pure water which she was so busy defiling, and, brandishing some score of yards of the tripe in her right hand, was in the act of accomplishing her threat, when I suddenly disengaged myself from the arm-strings of my pack, and, parrying the blow which was aimed at me, I closed at once with my fair adversary, and, ere she could raise a scream, sufficient to alarm the whole town land, I had taken as many favours from her as ever Apollo did from Daphne. To scream so loud and shrill as to bring down upon us half-a-dozen dogs, and nearly as many herds, was the work of an instant; but of an instant during which she was made distinctly to perceive that I was no lassie, but a young fellow of some spunk and mettle.

“What's the matter wi' Jenny?” said a stout figure, snugly wrapped up in the shepherd's toga.

“Matter!” replied Jenny—“matter!”—adjusting her dress, and now red from ear to ear—“why, I believe, after a', there is nae great matter—but that body frightened me sae with his kists and his coffins, I was amaist out o' my wits.”

“Kists and coffins, ye gomeril woman!—why, that's a packman; and I'll warrant he has as mony shawls, and gown-pieces, and ribbons, and as muckle braw Brussels lace in his box, as wad set ye fleeing to kirk on Sabbath, like an Indian queen. Come in, lad—come ben—its getting dark, and ye're far here frae ony neighbour town—come away, and ye shall hae yer supper in the spense, and yer bed in the cha'mer—and Jenny there into the bargain, if ye will only promise to mak us rid o' her for guid and a'.”

“Jenny!—hegh! that's aye indeed!” responded the fair

tripe-scourer.—“ I’se warrant, guidman, ye wad soon be sending a’ owre the country, and sticking up bits o’ paper on the kirk doors, war I only four-and-twenty hours amiss-ing ; and, as for Wee Watty there—if there be a bauk low enough to hang him, ye wad be sure to find him, ere the first twal hours were owre, dangling frae’t, like a periwinkie candle hanging to a spit.”

Upon this sally of Nanny’s wit, all things were put to rights, and the packman was snugly lodged *versus* the guidinan, the guidwife, and God only knows how many persons, in the spence, or small apartment adjoining to and looking in upon the kitchen. The Chapman’s drouth is proverbial—and, to assuage it, I was immediately supplied with a cog o’ crap-whey, bannocks, and a ram-horn spoon, just to put aff the time till supper was ready ! In the meanwhile, the inmates of the farmer’s kitchen began and continued to congregate. Some half-score of acres of inland croft had just been reaped, and there had been the promise of a hett supper and a dance, to conclude the comparatively insignificant grain harvest. James Hogg, then a youth of twenty-four, acted as chief musician, and contrived to extract from the thairms of an old time-worn fiddle, some sounds, which, when assisted by a lively imagination and high animal spirits, passed for music. And the guidman led off the dance wi’ the guidwife—snapping his fingers, and springing three or four times over the kitchen fire. The guidwife enjoyed the fun exceedingly ; and, though encumbered in more ways than one, spread her napkin over her breast—adjusted her pockets and nether garments, and presented herself every now and then to the guidman, with a sly look and a sidelong bob. I was lucky enough to get hold of Nanny, whom, in spite of Wee Watty, as he was termed, I drew at once into the centre of the whirlpool, and there we went, hand in hand, round and round, with the velocity of planets whose orbits

are limited—Wee Watty, for the time, having supplied himself with Nell Morrison, a tall, prepossessing wench, who seemed to rejoice in vexing my partner, Nanny, who was manifestly Wee Watty's favourite. Shepherds—as Wilson would say, shepherdesses—sported around, like giants dancing to Polyphemus; and boys, girls, and dogs caught the infection—screaming, barking, singing, leaping, and reeling, as God gave them instinct. Hogg seemed amazingly delighted, and, ever and anon, removed his hand from the strings of the fiddle, to flourish it aloft in the air, and then come down flap upon some sonsy cummer's neck, as she demanded “Dainty Davie,” “Jenny Nettles,” or “The Highlandman kissed his Mother”—the triad which composed our fiddler's whole stock of tunes!

At last, supper came, in the shape of boiled bloody puddings, haggis, king's-hood, and a long *et cetera* of inferior occupants of the interior of a sheep-skin. There was, besides, a sprinkling of whisky, administered in its natural purity, and, after a song or two from Nanny, and Hogg, who gave “Donald Macdonald” in his own style, sleep began to intimate his claims, and we all stepped off our several ways to bed.

I could easily perceive, as I imagined—for there is a masonry in all manner of love concerns—that I had made a favourable impression upon Nanny, and that she would have no great objection to spend an hour or two in my company when all the other inmates, and, amongst them, Watty Telfer, had gone to rest. I had learned all this by certain signs, and winks, and nods, and squeezes, which are Hebrew to all but the parties concerned; and I took my way across the closs to the cha'mer, under a firm conviction that I should meet Nanny behind the great peat stack whenever the last dog had ceased to bark. Accordingly, I was early at the place of rendezvous, and waited.

with some impatience, the approach of my fair visitant. The night was dark and somewhat misty, and I could not distinctly see to any distance. At last, a figure began to move in the distance, closely wrapped up in a Scottish plaid, from foot to head, and stretching forward its head as if in the act of listening. "Is that you, Nanny?" was whispered, and responded to by a silent nod of assent; and, ere I could make any farther observation, Nanny was close by my side. To my surprise, however, she refused to permit me to unveil her face, and spoke so low that I was difficulted in getting at the import of her words.

"Is Watty Telfer to bed?" said I.

"Yes—oh yes," was the response; "and you and I will play him a trick, if you will only assist me."

I promised immediately to be art and part—for I liked fun and frolic dearly, and I thought Watty was the only obstacle to my suit with fair Nanny.

"Watty sleeps by himsel in the stable aboon the naigs; and, if you will go up the ladder, which I will show you, you will find his clothes lying upon an old chair just at the ladder-head. Now, just slip quietly one of your best waistcoat-pieces into his pocket, and we will swear, to-morrow morning, that Watty entered the auld cha'mer, when you were asleep, and stole the piece. I will be answerable to you for the money."

The scheme pleased me exceedingly; so I ascended the ladder and deposited the goods as directed. But, when I turned about again to descend, I found the ladder, as well as my directress, absent without leave. What was to be done? I could not descend without risk to my neck from the stable loft; and yet I was afraid that, if Watty should awake, he would take me for a thief, and, perhaps, tumble me headlong from the dangerous position which I occupied. In feeling, therefore, about me, to ascertain if

there was no other method of escape, I was immediately seized by the neck, and grasped so closely that I had almost been choked ere I could ejaculate—"Help! murder!" &c. Not a word was said in reply; but I felt cords passing around my body in various directions, and myself tied down, like Gulliver, flat on the boards and beams beneath me. I expostulated—threatened—coaxed my tormentors—for I felt there were two—but all to no purpose. My destiny was fixed, and there I lay supine, whilst my mischievous jailors manifestly slept, and even snored aloud. At last, worn out with watching and vexation, I fell soundly asleep; and, when I awoke, it was broad daylight. I found my limbs unloosed, my tormentors gone, and the ladder by which I had ascended restored.

Next day, I learned that, instead of playing a trick upon any one, I had myself been imposed upon, to the immense amusement of Nanny and the whole household. It was not Nanny, but wee Watty Telfer, with whom I had conversed by the peat stack. It was *he*, set on by James Hogg, who had got me up the ladder, and then, entering himself by another passage, had assisted a fellow-servant in binding me, and in ultimately releasing me from limbo. Well, what, good reader, did I do on this occasion? Did I immediately take things in great dudgeon, and depart with my pack in great wrath? No such thing. I had listened to my uncle to little purpose had this been the result. On the contrary, I immediately displayed my tempting articles before the young couple, Watty and Nanny, who were actually bride and bridegroom, and sold to the whole family, the young folks included, not less than upwards of ten pounds of goods; not one farthing of which would I have pocketed had I been the fool to resent my somewhat disagreeable usage. Ever after this adventure, I was a welcome visitant at Locherben; and Nanny Telfer who is now the mistress of a large family, and has

servants of her own, patronises me to a very considerable extent. Wee Watty has become staid and industrious, and rents a sheep-farm from the Duke of Buccleuch, on which he seems to thrive amazingly. Indeed, all the duke's tenantry are in a very thriving condition ; for this simple reason—that they are not rack-rented.

CHAPTER III.

IT was about dusk when I was caught in a mist on the borders of Scotland. I had made my way from Manchester, by Kendal and Penrith, and was on a long stretch across the bleak muirs which separate England from Scotland, as you advance towards the village of Castletown on the Liddle. Not being familiar with the footpath which I was tracing, I fairly lost my way, and had some severe pulls, through mosses and ravines of no ordinary depth and extent. Still, I was young and strong, and not subject to superstitious fears. At last, however, I was enveloped in close and almost palpable darkness, or rather whiteness—for the ground-mist rose, and crawled, and trailed, white, and damp, and still, all around me. I even felt as if it entered my very nostrils, and made a portion of myself. I could scarcely see the two ends of my pack, as they peeped over my shoulders. My faithful dog Neptune, of the Newfoundland breed, went on, however, gaily and caressingly before me ; and seemed to say, at every return, “Another effort, master—one pull more—and we shall be alongside of the flesh-pots of Mr. Elliot, laird of Whithaugh.” All at once, I came to the brow of a precipice, from which my faithful monitor warned me to retreat ; and while in the act of so doing, I thought I heard human voices in the linn beneath. Neptune, too, gave loud note of the dis-

covery ; and in an instant was engaged in mortal warfare with a bull-dog of great power and fierceness. Whilst I was endeavouring, with my yard-wand, to separate the combatants, a stout, tall, and somewhat ungainly figure came, with a long horsewhip, to my assistance. The combatants, seeing how matters stood, were content to adopt the growling, instead of the tearing system ; and separated, as if by mutual agreement, that matters should not long remain as they were. However, a leash of strong cord, with a neck-band, made fast Neptune's opponent, and rendered it safe for Neptune and me to accept of the stranger's invitation to join their camp.

The camp was, indeed, of a novel and somewhat strange description. Over a brawling current, which, as I was told, at this point separated England from Scotland, there were extended from rock to rock, poles and branches of dwarf-elder and saughs, which were growing, or rather decaying, on each side of the glen or linn. These branches and poles were again traversed by cords, which kept them in close order and regular position. Over all, were laid turf, and spret, and bog-hay, which formed a kind of isthmus betwixt the two kingdoms. When you stood in the middle of this erection, you were neither in England nor in Scotland, but *medio tutissimus* ; and, should the civil power show its miscreant front on the one side, you could immediately retreat to the other, and *vice versa* with regard to that of England. The gipsies were the famous Yetholm band, and had hived here for some time past, disposing during the day-time, of their pots, pans, ram-horn spoons, and other kitchen conveniences ; and spending the night under shelter of their tents, located, or rather suspended, as above-mentioned, in riot, uproar, revelment, and debauchery. There were about an equal number of men and women, but no children—these being left at Yetholm, where they remained stationary during the winter months.

Their king or leader was at this time Cuthbert, or Cubby Elliot, who boasted of his long descent and connection with the laird of Whithaugh, on the skirts of whose property he was now encamped. The use which Cubby made of his relationship with Whithaugh, was to amerce him in a fat wedder every time he came round, together with a gallon of whisky, in consideration for which voluntary donation he protected his hen-roost and barn-yard from all manner of gipsy depredation. This was sheep-night, as it was called—the evening, namely, on which the Whithaugh wedder was to be discussed, and the whisky was to be drunk; and the whole company was in the middle of the wassail, when I stumbled upon their retreat.

Being not unknown to Cuthbert, whom I had even met at Whithaugh's fireside, I ran no risk either of insult or violence; but, on the contrary, was hailed with an uproarious welcome, which made the grey gled quit the cliff above. The small cask containing the laird's *due*, as they called it (mountain dew was then a term unknown), lay in the midst of the encampment, alongside of a blazing heap of brushwood, which seemed, ever and anon, to threaten with conflagration the whole erection; and the sheep, roasted, or rather broiled, in its own skin, betwixt two forked poles, was subjected every now and then to an incision from the large whangers or knives, which, like Hudibras' sword, "served more purposes than one." The mist sat close above; the flames roared in unison with the torrent beneath; the barrel gave out its glutting contents in horns and cups; the bare poles of the sheep began to appear in the shape of ribs; the song, the jest, the jeer, the howl, the tumble, the almost quarrel, were all in their height, when I thought I heard a distant but terrific sound. With difficulty I procured a temporary suspension of noise. It was manifestly distant thunder. No matter—on went the carousal. A young man who had lately joined the gang, made a

conspicuous figure; he was evidently over head, ears, and shoulders, in love with Ellen Elliot, the king's fair and buxom daughter. The fellow was such a one as I have never seen before nor since. He had the eye of a hawk or eagle; a nose corresponding; high cheek-bones; fair or yellowish hair, forking out like lightning in every direction; a red beard, fully a month old; and the limbs, and nerves, and muscles of a giant. He twisted a horse-shoe in two behind his back; held out a musket by the extremity of the muzzle, his arm at full stretch; and lifted up Ellen Elliot, tossing her up in the air, and catching her again, like a tennis ball. His name I have since learned, though I am not at liberty to divulge it, as he now occupies a chair in one of our most celebrated universities, which he adorns with as much vigour and originality as he did that night the tinkler's gathering. It is thus that men of genius study human nature to advantage, and not in the turning over of quarto volumes from one year's end to the other; and it was thus that the great and celebrated Christ——N—— acquired that richness of illustration and vigour of conception which have raised him, in this respect, above every living name. Long may he live!—and often may the fresh and vigorous effusions of his pen recall to my recollection the astonishing gambols and revelment of this evening! At last, however, the cask gave out its last benediction—the utmost effort of man or woman could not extract a drop more; limbs became supple, and eyes misty, muddy, heavy, and shut. Men slid down in their garments, and snored aloud; women disappeared into the now closing obscurity, and huddled together under eaves and covering; the embers emitted, or were about to emit, their last gleam, when the young and extraordinary person I have described, made up to me. I had thought him drunk; but he was not—it was all assumed. We entered immediately into conversation, and he made me acquainted

with his resolution of stealing away from the frolic whilst the company slept. In this he was joined by me, and we were upon the point of putting our resolution into execution, when a sudden gleam of lightning shone in upon us, and two or three large pieces of hail, or rather ice, came down with the force and velocity of shot. All at once, the waters of the linn began to tumble about in an unusual manner—the Gullet, or Gray Mare's Tail, immediately above us, presented, even through the shade of night, a fearful projection of flood; the gullets roared and choked, and accumulated sticks, and turf, and heath, in their descent; and, ere a single individual could be aroused, the whole erection on which the whole gang were sound sleeping, was swept down the flood. Piteous was indeed the picture, and terrible the screams; but after the obstruction behind which the waters had accumulated gave way, the stream narrowed in its course, and many were left on dry land, almost without any efforts of their own. The fearless stranger was everywhere—he seemed now to be amphibious; and Neptune, too, was of the greatest service. I myself was not awanting either in courage or enterprise; and so it came to pass, that, in a few seconds, all had mustered, save one, the buxom and frank-hearted Ellen Elliot. The father raved, and dashed anew into the gullets. “Search Hell's Caldron!” was the almost universal cry. This was a terrible pool, some way down the stream. My young friend flew off; and I saw him leap some twenty or thirty feet into the black and boiling flood; he came up again exhausted, but exclaiming—“She is here! she is here!” Her father's plunge was simultaneous with the last words; down they both went together, and up they brought betwixt them poor Ellen Elliot. She was apparently dead; but, being laid on the brink of the pool, with her head downwards, much water escaped from her mouth. “She lives! she lives!” exclaimed parent and

lover at once ; "oh, kindle a fire !" It was done, I never knew how, as if by magic. Spirits from a small flask in her father's side-pocket were made use of first externally, and latterly internally. Ellen awoke in terrible pain, she travailed fearfully into life; but at last she became sensible, and her first words were—"Bless me ! what a terrible dream I have had!"

All is well that ends well. Ellen Elliot, the fair gipsy, is now Lady Whithaugh ; the old man in his dotage having taken it into his head to marry again, though he was at the time a grandfather. She is one of my most steady customers, and I have no doubt that, when the old, kind-hearted, and easy-tempered laird shall have taken his leave, she may very soon after take her leave of widowhood—and why not? Then will be "a wedding," and there (perhaps) may be the writer and the reader of these chapters! Amen!

CHAPTER IV.

As I was wending my way from the hospitable mansion of Whithaugh, up Hermitage Water, I was decoyed, by the near appearance of the old castle, to deviate a little from the straight but steep and difficult road to Hawick, to visit the ruins of this old Border keep—where Queen Mary once lodged, and Bothwell once met her—where still sleeps the stern ghost of Soulis, and the tremendous bones of the Count of Baldar. As the stream abounded in fish, I undid my pack, and, from the upper corner, extracted a fishing-rod, which I had purchased at Kendal, and amused myself, for an hour or two, in this most fascinating amusement. Alas ! I have lived to see other times and other circumstances!—rivers without fish, and fishers

without spirit: the one spoiled of their finny inhabitants by every chemical abomination, and the other contented with a brace of parr or a triad of minnows. But to my narrative. I soon filled a bag which I carried for the purpose, and was at last compelled to give up the sport, from my inability to carry any additional weight. By this time, I had reached the old castle, and taken an eye measurement of its meaningless and monotonous architecture. Strength and security seem to have been the only objects pursued in its erection. But time had destroyed the one, and the other had ceased to be an object. I was on the point of leaving this keep—with many suitable reflections on the changes which time had wrought since Soulis roasted his foes, or cut them to pieces in the dungeon with the saw-mill—when I thought that I perceived a little thread of blue smoke escaping through the loose stones by which the interior of the ruined walls was occupied. This naturally excited my suspicion that there were more doings going on than I was aware of; so, depositing my trouts and my pack on the green bank of the Hermitage Water, I began to peer and poke about, with the end of my fishing-rod, amongst the stones. Neptune, too, had smelt a rat, and was busy, nose, and feet, and tongue, in assisting me in some mighty discovery. But all our efforts were in vain: the smoke ceased to issue, if indeed it had been smoke at all; and, although Neptune encompassed the old tower as often as Moses did the city of Jericho, yet still the immense walls stood true to their foundation; and, night coming on, we were compelled, though reluctantly, to leave the spot. Having determined to reach Hawick this night, I pushed on, there being good moonlight, though the evening was cold; and Neptune, as usual, kept on the advance, giving me timely intimation of whatever might, or might seem, to approach us. At or near the top of the ridge which separates the vale of the Hermitage from that

of the Kitterick, there stood, and perhaps still stands, a small public-house, built for the accommodation of such travellers as pass this way, dreary and difficult as it is. Into this, Neptune and I thrust our noses, and found a large family of children gathered around a blazing peat fire. We took our position immediately by the fire, and learned from the children that their mother was milking the cow—that their father had been killed in a quarry some months ago—and that there was a great number of fine-dressed gentlemen *ben* the house. The mother, a decent, melancholy-looking woman, soon entered, with the milk-stoup in her hand, and immediately proceeded to replenish the gill-stoup with a very different beverage, for the use of her *ben*-house customers.

“She didna ken weel what to mak o’ them,” she said ; “but she thought, by their way o’ speaking, and their dress, and ither accoutrements, they were maybe limbs o’ the law—the deil’s agents, excisemen—wha wadna let a puir body live, if they could prevent it.”

At this time, one, who seemed to be the commander of the party, entered the kitchen, manifestly flustered with drink ; and, seeing my fish-bag lying on the dresser, immediately seized it, exclaiming, “By G—! what have we got here?” However, he was soon disabused, if he imagined it to contain any illicit commodity ; and, slipping a half-crown into my hand (which I willingly accepted), he ordered the fish to be immediately prepared for his supper, and that of his companions. They were, indeed, a jolly company, and, after a little while, invited me to partake of the produce of my own sport, and of a due qualification of whisky. In the course of an hour or two, we got exceedingly well acquainted ; and I found, at last, from several incidental observations, that they had received information of an illicit still being in the neighbourhood, and were about to surprise those engaged in it

so soon as the moon should set, and their approach might be covered by the darkness.

Upon finding how the land lay, it immediately occurred to me that my uncle would have contrived to turn this incident to his professional advantage. It was manifest that, although their information extended to the whereabouts, they were ignorant of the exact spot where the illicit manufacture of whisky was, in all probability, going forward. In fact, they were led to believe that an old shieling, or shepherd's hut, constructed out of a mountain cairn, was probably the place where the work was proceeding. I opened my mind to them somewhat cautiously, by proposing that they should deal with me in such goods as my pack, so recently replenished at Manchester, would supply. They were all very shy, and expressed their *contempt* indeed of any such preposterous proposal. But, when I hinted that I was in possession of such information as might lead to the accomplishment of their object, they took at once at the bait, and agreed that, not only they, but their wives and families, should be supplied from my stores. Fancy waistcoats, watch-chains, twelve-bladed knives, razors, snuff-boxes, and pocket-books, were immediately secured, and handsomely paid for; and Neptune and I (for I verily believe he understood the whole transaction) had the pleasure of making a very considerable profit, by gaining at least 100 per cent. upon the whole concern. About 11 o'clock—for they were now impatient to secure their prize—we advanced, seven strong (exclusive of Neptune), upon the old tower of Hermitage.

But our approach had been anticipated, and the bird was flown. Some friendly imp, one of the family where we had so recently been convened, had probably given the necessary intimation to the illicit distillers; and, after much searching, and some curious discoveries of dark passages, and dungeons half filled with rubbish, we found a

cask or two of recently distilled spirit, with a few vats or tubs which had not been removed. It was manifest, however, from what we had discovered, that my information had been correct, and that, though flown, the bird would not be at any great distance. The whisky was removed to the public-house which we had just left; and, when we were in the act of returning upon our footsteps, we were met by a bare and curly-headed callant, about twelve years of age, who seemed inclined, when too late, to avoid any encounter. This excited our suspicion; and he was immediately secured, and questioned hard, whether he knew anything about the distillery in the Auld Tower.

“Na,” said the urchin, “I ken naething about tilleries; but I ken weel there’s something no canny about the place.”

“What makes you think so, my man?”

“Ou, I dinna ken—I reckon it will be Auld Soulis’ ghost; for he was an awfu wicked man, my mither says, and canna get rest in his grave at nae rate. I hae seenlichts about the auld place mysel.”

And hereupon the rascal looked about him, as if afraid to speak out, and, in a low voice, gave us to understand that he had just met an awesome sight: it rowed owre the body, and owre the body, and rumbled away down the linn into the miller’s house yonder. It was for a’ the warl’ like a whean corn-sacks, dyed black, and clinking ane against anither.”

“Why, man, corn sacks dinna clink.”

“Maybe no; but the deil’s sacks are different. I reckon they wadna stand fire, unless they clinked.”

There was no resisting this logic; so our informant was desired to show us the direction in which the apparition had gone. He pointed to a glen or linn on Hermitage Water, and to a light which flitted before us, appearing and disappearing at intervals. Down the glen we instantly

rushed, through some brushwood, and along a narrow pass. When we had reached the mill-steading, the light had disappeared; and, on investigation, our informant likewise. We found the miller still at work, and not a little surprised at our untimely and really unwelcome visit. It was manifest now, that we had been imposed upon by the knowing urchin, who, to give time for escape to the illicit traders, had trumped up the ghost story, well knowing that a direct information might have been suspected. In a word, we were completely out; and, where the distillers betook themselves, whether across the Border, or into some of the almost inaccessible mountains of Eskdale-muir, remains to this day a secret. However, I had made my market, and earned additional patronage by a chance adventure, which was quite in my uncle's way, and gave me assurance that, by pursuing a similar course in future, I should undoubtedly prosper.

My next advantageous hit was made at Moffat. To this favourite resort of the invalid, the idle, and the wealthy, there had been added this season a dinner, given by the advocates in Edinburgh to the future *author* of the poems of Ossian. Macpherson had just published some fragments of the Gaelic poetry, and had excited the attention of the learned world, by his announcing that, if he had the means, he would collect through the Highlands many larger and more valuable works of Ossian and other bards. I had been lucky enough to have purchased, when at Glasgow, a cheap remnant of the Macpherson tartan, having heard that it would take in England—but I was mistaken; and I could not prevail upon a single gentleman or lady of any note, betwixt Carlisle and Manchester, to patronise it.

Their patronage, in my trade, as in most others, is everything. Only get some celebrated country belle to sport a particular and uncommon pattern at a market or at church, and the fate of your napkin-web is fixed. Only get the

laird's eldest son to appear in the gallery, at church, in a waistcoat of a particular stripe and combination of colours, and every boor in the parish will purchase the like, at three or four prices. Only get a bride, on her wedding-day, to sport the newest ribbon, and your box is immediately emptied. It is thus that pedlar profit is realized, and a certain degree of notoriety, if not popularity, is obtained. I had got a waistcoat made, for my own use, out of this bit of unsaleable tartan—not, indeed, at the time anticipating any advantage, but the ordinary wear, from the garment. But, as good fortune would have it—and she has much to say in all professions—this very waistcoat was, in a sense, the making of me. I appeared in the town of Moffat in this tartan waistcoat, and had the good fortune, as I stood opposite to the inn-door where the company were to dine, adjusting my pack, and preparing to expose my goods to public view, to be observed from the window by Macpherson himself. He immediately announced the fact of the nature of the tartan which I wore to the gentlemen around him. They immediately began to wonder if the pedlar had any more of the same pattern in his pack; and, from one thing to another, it was agreed, at last, to address me on the subject. Down they came—for they had yet half-an-hour to wait for dinner; and, having made the necessary inquiries, were answered, somewhat shyly, by me, that I “didna ken but I might hae a wee bit o' the same web.” (In fact, I had upwards of two hundred yards deposited snugly in a friend's house, as I passed to England, besides the remnant carried along with me!) So I opened out my supply, and, in a few seconds, I sold the whole of it.

Next day, my pack was exposed at the principal well; and, to my no small delight, I saw Macpherson himself, with upwards of a score of advocates, all sporting the tartan. The thing took like wildfire; piece after piece,

(always the last!) I produced and sold; and had I been possessed of double, or even ten times the quantity, I verily believe I might have sold it, at any price. The very shepherd lads, from Queensberry and Errickstane, were down upon me, coaxing and urging me to let them have a waist-coat-piece, at any price. But the more fixed merchants of the place saw my advantage; and, by dismissing an express to Glasgow, in two or three days had their windows filled with the Macpherson. The fever, however, was over. Macpherson himself, waistcoat and all, had set out on his celebrated Highland search; the advocates had returned to their briefs; and the Moffat haberdashers had reason to regret their hasty proceedings in this matter. I had, however, realized a round sum of profit—not less than forty pounds—on this hit; and was content to limit my sale to the more ordinary commodities of my pack, for the rest of the time which I sojourned here.

From Moffat, I took the road, across the hills, to Durrisdeer. At this time, the famous M'Gill was minister of this parish. He was a man celebrated, in his day, for fervency in preaching; for marrying a Miss Goodfellow, (who had paid for his education, and was on the wrong side—I don't say of fifty, but at least of seventeen;) and for his extensive powers and experience in *haggis*-eating. The “Kirkton” of Durrisdeer—a small cluster of houses around the church—has been celebrated by Burns, in his “*Tam o' Shanter*”—

“And at the Lord's house, even on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' *Kirkton* Jean till Monday.”

This parish is principally mountainous, and, consequently, pastoral; and the shepherds and sheep-farmers were, at the time of which I speak, in the habit of transacting their worldly affairs, after church time, on the sabbath evenings. This traffic was carried on in small, thatched ale-houses, some of which still remain, kept in general, by old women,

(one of whom lived to see 114 years !) and, in one particular exception, by a jolly young lass, yclept "Kirkton Jean." Nobody knew Jean better than Burns ; and though, in his admirable poem, he places her near the Doon, yet, in fact, she was a nymph of the Carron, and a parishioner of Durrisdeer. It grieves me sore to say it, but Jean, though a stanch and steady believer and kirk-goer, though a great favourite with the minister, and with all the younger part of the plaided mountaineers, was detested by many decent women, and, in particular, by Mrs. M'Gill, who said she could not bear the sight of her. Her house, however, was much resorted to, and her company, as well as her ale, much sought after ; and, when I reposed my pack on Jean's chest-lid, she gave me a hearty welcome, and, telling the old, blind body, her grandmother, that here was the pedlar, greeted me in the most kind and couthy manner possible. It was not my usual wont to put up in a public-house, where I had to pay for my food and bed ; but I had my reasons in this case, as the reader will see anon. I arrived on the Tuesday of the sacrament, and attended sermon on Thursday and Saturday, as well as on Sunday.

Monday, however, came at last ; and it was towards this Monday that I was looking during all the previous days ; for this Monday was, in fact, the great market day of the parish. After M'Gill had preached in the open air to a vast multitude, (for he was the most popular preacher of the presbytery,) man, wife, and wean, master, servant, merchant—all classes and denominations of Christians—were immediately up to the ears in drink and traffic, buying, selling, hiring, *niffering*, as if religion and its observances had been unknown amongst them. The mind of man is a queer concern—at least, the heart, on the best authority, is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ;” and, really, the “Kirkton” of Durrisdeer, in the days of M'Gill, and on the Monday of the sacrament in particular, but too

manifestly exhibited the truth of this observation. I had placed my pack on a stand, by the kirk-stile ; and, as the congregation dispersed, they had one and all an opportunity of seeing my goods in a state of full display. I had no rival, unless a very decent old woman might be considered as such. She sold a few articles of dress, such as stockings and plaids, all of her own and her daughter's manufacture ; but mine were Manchester and Glasgow goods of the very newest fashion, and worn by every lady and gentleman of quality betwixt the two great marts. As the evening advanced, Jean's house became more and more difficult of access. My station was what is termed the spence, or the mid-room or closet, betwixt the kitchen and the *ben*. There I stood, with my ell-wand in my hand, measuring off waistcoat-pieces, displaying shawls, and exhibiting watch-chains and knives, till late in the evening. Some moorland farmers purchased largely on credit—a mode of dealing which I greatly relished, for two reasons : first, because it gave me an opportunity of visiting them in their mountain homes ; and, secondly, because I could then with a safe conscience, or, at least, without challenge, charge double the original price. I need not, and I shall not, proceed with the sequel of the evening's events. From Jean, I learned that old Fingland, who was now a widower, had actually asked her in marriage ; and that, in a few days, she should, in all probability, be Mrs. Gibson. The poor, doited, drunken body had a good farm from the Duke of Buccleuch ; and, having got rid of his family by his first spouse, thought himself entitled to enter anew into the hallowed and often-tried state. He lived to repent his precipitancy and indiscretion ; for Jean ruined him in a few months, and making a moonlight flitting, was afterwards found in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh, mistress of the public-house called the Harrow. But here my narrative must conclude for the present.

DUNCAN SCHULEBRED'S VISION OF JUDGMENT.*

WELL, it is always the same: We are fed by the moralities just as we are by potatoes. We must be always repeating the dose to keep the world in order, and thus it is that we go on. We see many examples of the extraordinary discovery of evil designs attempted to be concealed by all the craft of cunning man; nay, it is impossible to doubt, even with the many cases before us of the apparent success of criminal schemes, that it is a part of God's providence to lay open the secret actings—often the secret thoughts—of those who contravene his laws. The modes by which this purpose is fulfilled are as various as the designs themselves; and though some of them may not appear to be consistent with the seriousness and gravity of an avenging and punishing retribution, we are not, on that account, to doubt their authority or undervalue their effect. Now, we have a case to record of an extraordinary and ludicrous discovery of roguery, which, as well on account of its truth as the moral which, amidst all its grotesqueness, it inculcates, deserves to be remembered. It may do good too to that "muckle ne'er-do-weel," Human Nature, who is still enjoying his grin at the schoolmaster, the philanthropist, and the bible.

In that manufacturing town which has lately risen to considerable eminence, called Dunfermline, there lived,

* The vision here recorded will carry a greater interest to the reader, when he knows that it is not a *mere* fancy. Many still living can recognize in the narrative all the circumstances of the real adventure. We think proper thus to authenticate our tale, to prevent it from being classed among current versions (taken from our own original), which have no more foundation than may be claimed for other good stories.—ED.

some time ago, a person of the name of Duncan Schulebred, by trade a weaver—or, as he chose rather to be called, a manufacturer, a term which the inhabitants love to apply to every man who can boast the property of a loom and its restless appendage. We believe the people of that town to be as honest and industrious as those of any mercantile place in the kingdom; but they have too much good sense to think of claiming for their entire community, a total exemption from the inroads of dishonesty and deceit—vices which prevail in every corner of this land. Unhappily, the individual we have mentioned had allowed himself to become a slave to those evil propensities which are concerned in the collecting together of ill-gotten wealth, and never left any feasible plan unattempted, which might present any chance of gratifying the ruling passion by which he was mastered. He was a little man, with a florid complexion, and the small twinkling eye which almost invariably accompanies cunning. His walk was that of a man accustomed to carry under his left arm a web of huckaback, and in his right hand a staff ellwand; and his style of speech, bland, conciliating, and persuasive, was derived from the habit of wheedling customers into exorbitant terms. He was a great coward, as well physical as moral—the consequence, doubtless, of being a dishonest trader. Altogether too contemptible to be hated, his greatest enemy was his own conscience, of which he stood in such terrible awe, that his wife was often obliged, during the dark hours of the reign of that mysterious agent, to rise and light a lamp for the purpose of excreising the spirit which, seated on his heart, tormented him with the gnawing inflictions of its pain.

This trick of his conscience had hitherto been unable to prevent Duncan from using his short ellwand, and acting dishonestly. The moment he got into daylight and active life, he, like all other cowards, despised the enemy from which

he thought himself at the time safe. In a strong-minded man, conscience produces resolution; in a weak, it gives rise merely to fears and vacillation. It is not often that greedy, cunning men are given to intoxication; yet we are obliged to add this vice to the character of Duncan Schulebred, who, exhibiting, however, the one vice in the other, never failed to get intoxicated, if he could effect his purpose at the cost of his neighbour—a result he often achieved, by leaving the tavern after he had got enough—on pretence of returning in a few minutes to the company of his unsuspecting victim.

Like many others of the peripatetic manufacturers of Dunfermline, Duncan Schulebred sold through the country the cloth he fabricated at home; so that, for one half, the winter, of the year, he *sat*, and for the other, the summer, he *travelled*. By the same means and ratio, Duncan Schulebred was one half of the year sober, and the other inebriated; for he could fleece no pot companion in his native town, where he was known; while, throughout the country, he could walk deliberately out of every ale-house on the road, and leave his travelling companions to pay for his drink, in exchange for that society which they had enjoyed.

Now, in the course of his journey, this individual had occasion, during the latter end of a summer, to be in Edinburgh, where he usually sold a considerable part of his stock. During the day, he had been in treaty with a person of the name of Andrew Gavin, a pettifogging writer, residing near the Luckenbooths, for the sale of a web of linen, which the latter, like a trout with a bait on a clear day, approached and examined, and looked at and felt, and yet still seemed irresolute in his determination to be caught. The weaver's twinkling eye saw and admired the gudgeon; the linen, to a *safe* extent, was unrolled, its texture felt with a "miller's thumb," its qualities extolled, and its price wondered at by him who fixed it and smiled

inwardly at his profit and the trick by which he realized it. The unwary purchaser, though a man of the law, was at last caught—the bargain was struck, the money paid; and all that remained was, that Duncan Schulebred, in addition to cheating him in the manner to be explained, should, after his usual practice, get drunk at the expense of his customer.

The two parties accordingly repaired to a tavern known by the name of The Barleycorn, where they sat down deliberately, to indulge in a deep potation. In the midst of their orgies, the customer, who had a humour of his own, took many "rises" out of his companion, who submitted to his fun, in consideration of his determination to leave him to pay "the score," which would put "the laugh on the other side." As they went on in their potations, Duncan Schulebred gradually drifted from one condition of evil to another. Originally his desire was simply to cheat the writer as a man. This was mere vulgar selfishness. He would have "done" any man after the same fashion, because it was his nature. But in this instance, he was concerned in the purpose of cheating a pettifogger, whose very occupation it was to cheat every poor litigant that came in his way. Here was a great occasion for Duncan Schulebred. He felt another motive prompting him to the gratification of his wickedness, and that was pride—the pride of circumventing those who circumvent others. Ah, Duncan Schulebred! you never thought of the ugliness of this peculiar aggravation of sin, when the evil genius rejoices in itself—when it is puffed up with the glory of exaltation, when instead of being checked by conscience, it is rather inspired by conscience "turned back side fore—all the wrong way." Neither did he consider that the said conscience has an ugly trick of springing round into the normal state, with a jerk not over pleasant to sinners. But even here Duncan Schulebred did not stop, for his

pride of overcoming the “devil’s limb,” was inflamed by revenge, in consequence of the pettifogger having traduced Dunfermline; not that Duncan Schulebred had any patriotism, even in Dr. Johnson’s sense of that virtue; but that he felt all the hits as directed against himself, just as every knave is always trying on the cap, and declaring that it is no fit. Behold selfishness, pride, and revenge, all met in one purpose; and as probably the writer had as many motives for attempting, by urging Duncan to drink, to enlarge the bill—the two were antagonists worthy of each other.

Their wordy war only made the writer and the weaver more thirsty; every argument was followed by a draught, which slaked at once both thirst and revenge. The more they drank the warmer they grew in defence of their respective towns, till they came to that condition of topers, when, by the mere operation of their potations, they become unable even to *dispute*. All confirmed drunkards have in their drunkenness some ruling principle, which, however far gone they may be, regulates their wayward movements. The writer’s habit was to sit when he thought he could not stand—one which many sober men might do well to adopt. The weaver’s, again, was to *walk* when he wished not to stand the reckoning—a prudent maxim which never left him, even when all other ideas had been washed from his brain. It was now about one o’clock in the morning, and they had drank so much that neither of them could tell—for neither had any interest in a matter which did not seem to concern his pocket—how much would require to be paid; it was enough for Duncan Schulebred, that he knew that something, and not little, *must* be paid—and now was the time for escape.

“We were speakin o’ the law,” said Duncan Schulebred, winking with cunning and hiccuping with drink—“I fancy they never refuse siller at the *bar* here, ony mair than they

do in Dumfarlan. There is only this difference atween the twa—that the folk wha resort to *your* bar pay when they enter, we (hiccup) pay as we gae oot. Rest yersel there till I cast up the bill, and if I hae ony *plea* wi' the landlord, ye can come and plead it."

"That's kind, Duncan," said the writer—"it will be the only plea I ever had from a Dunfermline weaver. If I gain it, we must have a—another gill."

"Twa o' them," replied Duncan, trying to rise. "We maun, at ony rate, hae (hiccup) the stirrup-cup, ye ken"—laughing and twinkling again his reeling eyes.

"O yes, but I—I fancy I must pay for *that*, seeing you are the traveller, and—and are besides to pay all this tremendous bill, that lies, doubtless, on the bar like a—a lawyer's memorial."

"Ye're an example o' an honest, ay, a generous writer," said Duncan Schulebred—wha could hae thocht ye wad hae offered to pay the stirrup-cup? I'll send yer wife a piece o' dornock for that, as weel as a screed o' huckaback and harn, to keep up a gratefu' recollection o' me after I'm awa. I'll no be a minute at the bar; for it's a place (hiccup) I dinna like."

"Here," cried the writer, riping his pocket—"take with you and pay at the same time the price of the stirrup-gill—one settling will serve all."

"Ye're richt, Mr. Gavin," replied Duncan Schulebred, receiving the money; "but that's a sma sum (hiccup) in comparison o' what I hae to pay; but it's pleasant to discharge the obligations o' honour."

Now, the wily huckaback manufacturer was, as he spoke, approaching the corner where his staff ellwand lay—an article he stood more in need of at that time (short measure as it was) than ever, on any other occasion of *taking off*, he had encountered. The recourse to it for the purpose of merely going to the bar, could not fail to raise suspicions

in the mind of the writer ; but then, again, was he to lose a *short* measure, which, getting into the hands of a writer, might be sent—in revenge of the trick he had already played him, in selling a web of linen damaged in the heart, and that he was about to play—to the public authorities, who would hunt him to Dunfermline, and ruin him by the exposure ? Not he. He besides required it for his support, for he could scarcely stand. In this dilemma, he had again recourse to his wits.

“ I’m no sure aboot thae folk ben the hoose,” said Duncan Schulebred, holding up the ellwand. “ They may try to cheat me, seein I’m a simple cratur, besides being twa *sheets* i’ the wind—(hiccup)—dinna ye think that I should tak my stick i’ my hand, as a kind o’ lawburrows and protection ? No to say I would think o’ usin’t, but simply to keep the publican in awe, and within just and lawfu measure.”

“ Take it with thee, take it with thee, man,” said the writer. “ Say it is a—a Dunfermline baton, the sign of your constableship, and you will find the bill two inches shorter.”

“ Ingenious cratur !” ejaculated Duncan, with a hiccup, and the old leer of his grey eyes. “ A law plea never can fail, surely, in the hands o’ a man wi’ sic a power o’ suggestion as ye hae. But ye forget that Dumfarlan batons are no sae lang as Dumfarlan ellwands—(hiccup)—the power o’ authority there’s short, but the reach o’ oor honesty’s prodigious. That’s a guid sign : our batons are short because we are quiet and civil, and our ellwands are lang because we are honest. Wad ye believe it, noo, that that ellwand o’ mine, in spite o’ the wear and tear o’ walkin wi’t, is a haiil inch different frae yer Edinburgh yards ? ”

This attack against the honesty of Edinburgh roused the blood of the writer, and another wordy battle was like to commence ; but Duncan Schulebred saw at once, that, if he put off more time, the people of the house might, from

the lateness of the hour, come and insist upon the reckoning on the spot—a measure which all his wits would not enable him to counteract. The open mouth of the writer was therefore shut, by a few conciliatory words from the aggressor:—

"I dinna say, Mr. Gavin," added Duncan Schulebred, "whether the inch belanged to Dumfarlan or Edinburgh. Ye may tak the benefit o' a *presumption* in yer ain favour till I come back. Mony aye o' yer tribe stick langer by a presumption than that, and, till it grows into a fact, it canna injure an honest man like me. Guid"—(he was going to add "night," and leered grotesquely at his own imprudence)—"guid—(hiccup)—guid luck to my speedy settlement o' the lawin!"

Then Duncan Schulebred staggered to the door, which he opened so gently that the writer might, if he had not been drunk, have suspected him of foul play. His foot was scarcely heard on the passage; but a sound, as if from the end of the stairs, indicated that some one had missed a step. No notice of it was taken by the writer, who sat with his eye fixed on the candle, concocting, like a good poet, one of those works of imagination called a preliminary or dilatory defence. Formerly, these works of fancy were very rife among lawyers, and, before the judicature act, they used to reach a second or even a third edition, under the form of "amended defences," "re-amended defences," and so forth. They are not now so much in favour, though the fancy which produces them is still as vivid as ever. How long Andrew Gavin sat dreaming over his intended work we cannot say; but never was poet more rudely, importunately, and unpleasantly roused from his dream, by the hand of a messenger-at-arms, than was the unsuspecting victim of Duncan Schulebred's treachery, as he was called upon by the landlord to pay the bill. He had no money upon him—the small sum he had given to the weaver to

pay the last or stirrup gill, and which the varlet had carried away with him, having been all his remaining cash, after paying the price of the linen. He requested the importunate landlord to wait a little, to ascertain if Duncan would return ; but the man wished to get to bed ; and Andrew's credit being somewhat worn, like that of many others of his overdone profession, the publican insisted upon him leaving his watch, as a pledge for the payment of the money. The writer's pride—a quality never awanting in the race, especially when they're in liquor—was roused ; he roared ; he refused to *impignorate*, as he called it, his watch ; he swore that he would rather remain in durance all night than succumb to the unreasonable demand of the publican. The man was as resolute as he, and, without saying a word, turned the key in the lock, and left the writer to dream over his legal works of fancy in the dark.

Meanwhile, the wily Duncan Schulebred, having recovered from a fall on the last step of the stair—produced by that impatience of slight obstacles which seizes an ambidexter at the successful termination of a well-concerted and better-executed scheme—proceeded down the Canongate. He was out and out intoxicated ; but the wish to cheat, so long as it was in operation, kept his mind from that confusion which, his purpose being effected, immediately seized him. He was not certain of the direction in which he was moving ; but he was satisfied with the idea that he was going *from* the sign of The Barleycorn, and any destination was better than that. A confused intention of sleeping all night in the town of Leith, with the view of catching the Fife boat in the morning, at last wrought its way through the cloud which overhung his mind ; and having found himself as far as the Water-gate, he continued his progress until he came to what is called the Easter Road, leading directly down to the Links. The air produced its usual effect upon a man who was filled to the throat

with liquor ; and every step he took he found himself getting more and more unsteady, and more and more unfit for prosecuting his journey. He was, however, still conscious of his condition, and felt great alarm lest some one should assail him, and take from him his money. By and by, even his consciousness left him, and he rolled from side to side, engrossing, for his own particular ambulation, the whole breadth of the road. Several times he came down, and, being unable to rise without many repeated attempts, lay on the ground for considerable periods. The necessity of motion of some kind is the last idea parted with by an intoxicated traveller ; and Duncan Schulebred still retained it, even after he had lost his ellwand, his chief means of support. On and on he struggled, falling, and lying, and rising, and to it again, till he got at length as far as the green called the Links of Leith—an open space always as disadvantageous to the drunk man as it is pleasant to the sober. A road with two sides may be got over—the dikes keep him on ; but an extended area of grass, with radiating openings all round, is a kind of place which a man in Duncan Schulebred's position, without the rudder or compass of consciousness, must always view with great uneasiness. Accordingly, Duncan Schulebred did beat about in this large circle for several hours, and at last entered a street which leads down to that called Salamander Street.

Having reached the south side of this street, Duncan Schulebred kept close by the walls and houses, stepping along, unwilling to trust himself again to open space. Alas ! he knew nothing of whither he was progressing ; he had lost all recollection of what he had been engaged in ; he was unconscious of what he was doing ; and he was utterly ignorant of all localities. As he moved past the houses, he came to an opening, and, staggering to a side, entered a small avenue into which it led, and proceeded along it, still holding by the wall, until he got into what he

thought was a large house. There he lay down, and fell in an instant into a sleep, disturbed by those frightful dreams that haunt the pillow of the dissolute and the wicked.

Having lain for hours, Duncan Schulebred began at last to show some signs of returning consciousness, rolling his body backwards and forwards, as if under the effect of a night-mare of the fancy, or of that more terrible night-mare of the conscience by which he was often at home so relentlessly ridden. And so he was. Frightful dreams had filled his mind with terrors; and, having produced a kind of half-waking state, were followed, as they usually were, by the gnawing of his old enemy. A dim recollection came on him of all the wickedness he had committed—the number of innocent individuals he had cheated by his short measure and his damaged linen; the shirking of publicans, the duping of travellers, his drunkenness, his lies, his false pretences—all his thoughts being accompanied by the terrors of his roused conscience, which whispered punishment by fire and brimstone, and filled his half-sleeping fancy with vivid images of the place of punishment. It is not unlikely that this half-waking, dreamy cogitation, was aided insensibly by the painful operation of external sense, conveying some dim intelligence of what was going on around him—the operations of glass-blowing on a great scale.

A large furnace was lighted, and blown up to a red heat; vivid flames shot forth from a fire, which was, from time to time, supplied with great quantities of fuel; at every blow of a large pair of bellows, the living light flashed through the space around, which was comparatively dark, from the disproportion between the large area, and the few lights yet lighted. Obscure-looking beings were occupied about the furnace, the light striking on their sallow faces, and leaving all again in an instant nearly dark; a number of others were busy in the distance, performing other

operations, dipping long tubes in some substance, and inflating a ball, till, red and glowing, it expanded into a fire globe. The dark beings were active in their movements, darting backwards and forwards between the furnace and the reservoirs, with the hot, red, glaring globes at the end of the tubes, and crossing and recrossing each other, in the dark obscure, so as to present the appearance of demons engaged in some mysterious doings of their avenging spirits. In all this, the fiery globes were the only appearances clearly discernible in continuation ; the figures and faces of the individuals being only at intervals shown by the glare thrown upon them by the glowing furnace, as it responded to the loud murmuring bellow of the inflating and fire-producing blast.

This condition did not last long ; Duncan Schulebred awoke to the full conviction of being in the very place of the damned. He heard the roaring of the bellows ; then he saw huge red walls rising up to heaven ; then his eyes turned round on that terrific furnace, vomiting forth its living fire, while the bearers of the burning globes, hurrying to and fro past him and around him, and plunging their fiery weapons into the receptacles, doubtless, of the condemned wicked—claimed, on every side, his rapt and terrified gaze. Fear prevented him from moving ; his cogitations took the form of a soliloquy ; and he communed with himself on his awful condition.

“Mercy on my puir soul !” exclaimed Duncan Schulebred, but so as not to let any eavesdropping devil hear him—“am I *here* at last ? When I was in the body, how often did I think and dream o’ the bottomless pit ?—can it be that I’m now in it ? Alas ! it’s owre true ! What hae I, a wicked cratur, now to expect frae thae fiends for a’ the sins dune i’ the body ? But when did I dee ? I dinna recollect the circumstance o’ my death—dootless apoplexy —ay, ay, I was aye fear’t for’t. Yet did I no fa’ doon the

stair o' The Barleycorn ? I did—that's it—I had been killed by the fa'. Death's a sma' affair to this. What a fiery furnace for a puir sinner ! See hoo the devils run wi' their burning brands, forkin them into thae pits, whar lie craturs in the same condition wi' mysel ! But why do they no come to me ? Ah ! the furnace is for me. I see Satan himsel at the bellows, and it's no for ilka sinner *he* wad condescend to work. It's for Duncan Schulebred, wha cheated the folk by a short ellwand at the rate o' thirty-six inches o' claih a-week for fifteen years—wha drank, and lee'd, and deceived—wha committed sins redder than scarlet and mair numerous than the mots i' the sun—wha dee'd i' the very act o' cheating Andrew Gavin, by selling him a wab o' damaged linen, and leaving him to pay the bill at The Barleycorn. Alas ! am I at last in this awfu place ! ”

As he ended, he heard pronounced in a hollow voice, by some Belphegor behind him :

“ Now, Duncan, thou wilt get thy fairin',
For here they'll roast thee like a herrin'.”

“ Ay, ay ! ” groaned Duncan.

Then a dark figure appeared before him, holding in his hand one of the fiery globes :—“ Where,” cried he, “ is the weaver who cheated the public at the rate of thirty-six inches of cloth per week, and died in the very act of cheating our *special friend*, Andrew Gavin the writer (for every writer is our special friend, and must be protected by us, so long as he writes lying defences and long memorials), by selling him damaged linen, and leaving him to pay his tavern bill ? Where is the scarlet rogue, that we may burn out the red of his sins by the red fire of this glowing furnace ? ”

A loud yell uttered by the Mephistophileses and Asmodeuses was the reply to this speech, and went to the very heart of the devoted Duncan Schulebred. The principal,

followed by his demons, approached him; he was lying, shaking and groaning, upon his back, and looked at the legion, with their flaming brands, with an expression of countenance transcending anything that could be produced by mere earthly agony, or described by a mere goose quill of the upper world.

"What is thy name, sinner?" asked the Prince.

"Mercy on me!" ejaculated Duncan Schulebred, "I'm in for't now! An' please your excellent Majesty," replied he, in a voice scarcely audible, from the pure effect of terror, "Duncan Schulebred, wha, when in the upper warld, was by trade a puir weaver in the toun o' Dumfarlan. I did yer Honour some service i' my sma' way, and hope ye winna be sae ill to me as ye threaten. Oh, keep thae fierce fiends, wi' their burning torches frae me, and I'll confess to ye a' my crimes. Be mercifu' to a puir sinner!"

"What service didst thou ever do to me?" said Satan.

"I made ye some freens," replied Duncan Schulebred, still groaning. "I did a' that was i' my power to get the craturs i' the upper warld to drink wi' me till they were sae drunk that ye might hae run awa wi' them as easily as ye carried aff Doctor Faustus or danced awa wi' the excise-man. Oh, think o' that, and save me frae that awfu' furnace!"

"Confess, sinner," said the Devil, "that thou didst that for the purpose of getting more easily quit of the tavern bills. Thou didst also cheat the lieges by a false measure."

"Lord, he kens everything," muttered Duncan—"I confess I did cheat the lieges; but I assure yer Majesty, upon my soul—now no muckle worth—that I never cheated ony o' yer Majesty's freens; for I aye dealt wi' honest folk. Surely that's a reason for some mercy."

"Recollect thyself, varlet," said Satan—"didst never cheat a writer?"

"How correct he is!" muttered Duncan Schulebred,

with a groan. “Ou ay—true, true—a’ writers are yer Majesty’s freens. I forgot. I did cheat Andrew Gavin, by sellin him a wab o’ rotten linen, and leavin him to pay the lawin at The Barleycorn—a name your Majesty, dootless, weel kens.”

“I think I should,” replied Satan, “seeing *that* is *my* grain, wherewith I work greater wonders than ever came out of the mustard seed. This place is fed with barley-corns—we bait our hooks with barleycorns—we spread barleycorns under our men-nets—the very man who sang the praises of the grain, under the personification of ‘John Barleycorn,’ and of its juice, under the soubriquet of ‘barley-bree,’ took our bait; but a redeeming angel touched him on the fore part of the stomach, and made him throw it, and heaven now boasts that glorious prize.”

“Miserable as I am, I’m very glad o’t,” said Duncan, whose fears began to decline. “I wadna like to see our darling poet in sic a place as this.”

“Impudent varlet!” said the Devil. “In with him into the furnace! Yet, stay. How much money did you cheat our friend Andrew Gavin of?”

“I needna try to conceal it,” said Duncan to himself. “He kens it as weel as I do. Here it is” (speaking out) “and some mair—ye may hae it a’, if ye’ll no consign me to that red-hot fiery furnace. Fearfu, fearfu place!”

“Count it out,” said Satan.

Duncan complied with trembling hands and Beelzebub took up the money.

“That is a most precious commodity,” said he. “They say, above, that our dwelling is paved with good intentions—they should rather say, that it is paved with gold, a metal with which the ancient infidels said heaven was constructed. Never was there a greater error. ‘The root of all evil’ cannot surely be found in the very birth-place of good.”

"I ken, at least," said Duncan Schulebred "that it was gowd that brought me here. Cursed trash! It is the gowd, and no the puir sinners deceived by't, that should be put into the furnace. Weel, weel has it been ca'd the root o' a' evil. Oh, cursed dross! what am I to suffer for ye?"

'Yon warld's gear, when I think on
Its pride, and a' the lave o't;
Fie! fie! on silly coward man,
That he should be the slave o't."

"Doth the creature malign our staple commodity," said Satan, "and say it should be melted? Well, away with him, Asmody, to the furnace!—melt *him*!"

Now did Duncan scream for mercy, while the dark spirits laid hold of him, and proceeded to carry him to the mouth of the furnace, at last blown up into a fearful red heat. He continued to roar with very great vociferation, making all the cone ring, and casting about his legs and arms, like one distracted. Those who were not engaged in carrying him, brought within an inch of his face, their burning globes of glass, and made indications as if they would apply them to his body; the bearers, turning his head to the fiery volcano, laid it within a foot of the burning coal; the whole ceremony was accompanied by a chorus of really frightful yells, set up by the operators, and made to echo and reverberate throughout the area of the cone. Independently, altogether, of the conviction of being in the hands of the Evil One and his legions, the situation of Duncan, with his head within a foot of a furnace, and surrounded by wild-looking howling beings, intent apparently on his destruction, would have terrified a pretty stout heart; but he *truly* believed himself on the very eve of being punished for his crimes, by being thrust head-foremost into the burning furnace, from which no power could save him. And who could contemplate that position without horror?

His agony was, in short, inexpressible, except by screams; and it was cruelly prolonged by affected manœuvres, such as blowing the bellows, and stirring and restirring the coals, to make them burn more fiercely, for the more adequate reception of the greatest of human sinners that had ever been consigned to the pit.

Having held him for some time in this position, Satan, seeming to recollect himself, cried out—

“Meph, do thou get the red-hot pincers. We were oblivious. He has not confessed all his crimes. We will pinch him for a few hours before we consign him to the fire, which is not, at any rate, red enough for so great a sinner. Asmody, lay him down close to the furnace, and now, a pair of pincers for each leg and arm. We will make him cry as loud as I did myself when St. Dunstan had me by the nose.”

Then was Duncan Schulebred laid before the furnace, screaming at the top of his voice, and his eyes rolling about like fiery balls. The pincers were brought and put into the furnace, and the bellows again sent forth their dreadful sound; the howling was increased; and all the dark spirits, as they uttered their yells, danced round him, waving their red globes, and every now and then bringing them within a few inches of his face. The pincers were getting hot apace, by the fierce blowing of the bellows; and one of the legion held the head of the victim so as to force him to contemplate the instruments of his torture. Still the confusion grew worse confounded—the noise of the blowing forge, the howling of the legion, the groaning and screaming of Duncan, the loud word of command of the Prince, all blending together; while the rapid motions of the dancers, and the rising and falling of the bellows, again made the eyes of the distracted being reel like those of a maniac.

This punishment was continued until it appeared that

the terrified Duncan Schulebred was about to faint. His cries ceased, and fear seemed to lose its effect over him. It was surely time to stop, as even amusement may be carried to the verge of death—and the unfortunate Duncan was more like death than life. The Prince accordingly gave the sign to his legion, and in an instant the bellows ceased to blow, and the men to dance, and all was as still as death. Apprehensive of having killed the victim by pure fright, the Prince, assisted by some of the crew, lifted him to a distance from the furnace, and having held up his head so as to get him to sit, some whisky was brought in by a Mephistophiles. As he sat pale and trembling, and looking wistfully about him, the chief actor filled up a glass of the spirits, and offered it to him. He seemed irresolute and timid—looking first at the whisky, then at the devils, and much at a loss what to think of his position. His grotesque appearance forced the chief actor to smile: the effect was instantaneous—Duncan caught the favourable indication, and took the glass into his hands.

"I didna think," said he, "that there was ony o' *this* kind o' liquor here. I expected naething but melted brimstone, said to be the staple drink o' your dominions. But is it really whisky? It's surely impossible—if the circumstance got wind aboon, that there was whisky in *these parts*, there wad be nae keepin folk out. How dinna ye spread the intelligence? Surely ye're no sae keen for recruits as ye were when ye danced awa wi' the exciseman."

"It is already known on earth that whisky was first brewed in Pandemonium," said the actor. "The nectar belongs to heaven, the wine to earth, and the whisky to the infernal regions. A thousand poets have sung about the drink of the gods, and a little old fellow—a Greek—who lies in one of these troughs, getting his wine-heated pate cooled with brimstone every five minutes, danced and sang the praises of wine till I got hold of him at the age of

eighty. The only poet who has let out the secret of whisky being first brewed in our regions was a person of the name of M'Neil, who sang—

‘ Of a’ the ills puir Caledonia
E’er yet pree’d, or e’er will taste,
Brewed in Hell’s black Pandemonia,
Whisky’s ill has scaithed her maist.’

I tried to get hold of the fellow, for his impudence in maligning our favourite liquor; but he wrote some sweet poems, and the gods took him under their wing.”

“ Ye were muckle indebted, I think, to Hector,” replied Duncan Schulebred, “ for tellin the folk that whisky was brewed here. It will save your Majesty a warld o’ trouble; for customers, o’ their ain accord, will come ‘ linkin to the black pit’ in millions, if they’re sure o’ the *spark*.”

“ They *are* sure of the *spark*,” replied the Prince. “ But we give it here only as a medicine whereby we recover our patients that they may be the more able to feel our torments. The moment thou drinkest, the pincers will be applied.”

“ Then I beg leave to decline the liquor,” said Duncan Schulebred, “ I see nae use for fire baith ootside and in; besides, I hae renounced the practice o’ drinkin at another person’s expense—a tred I followed owre lang in the upper regions, to my sad cost this day.”

“ Thou hast paid for this with the money thou gavest me,” said the actor.

“ That’s mair than I ever did upon earth,” said Duncan with a leer which he could not restrain.

Now, it will have been seen that the truth had for some time been dawning upon the mind of Duncan Schulebred. He looked round and round him, and every look added fresh proof of the delusion under which he laboured. Peering into the face of Satan, he even was bold enough to smile, accompanying the act with one of his inimitable

leers. It was impossible to resist this look of sly humour; and the whole company broke out into a fit of laughter, which made all the cone ring again. Then seizing the whisky he looked round upon all the parties, and, bowing, said—

“ Gentlemen, I'm obleeeged to ye for the trouble ye hae taen on my account. I see now how the land lies; but though I ken the haill extent o' this awfu delusion, dinna think that the part ye hae played is a piece o' mere fun and humour, to form afterwards the foundation o' a guid story. Ye hae dune mair this mornin for the regeneration o' a puir sinner than was effected by a' the sermons I ever heard frae the pu'pits o' Scotland. I've confessed my crimes to ye, and I canna expect that this cone is to confine for ever my evil reputation. It maun gae abroad and condemn me, and ruin me; but” (lowering his voice seriously) “I will defy it to prevent me frae following the course I hae this day determined to pursue. Frae this hour henceforth, to that moment when it may please Heaven to tak me frae this warld, I shall be an upright, a sober, and a religious man; the folk I hae injured, cheated, and robbed, I will try to benefit to the utmost extent o' my puir ability; every day o' my life will be dedicated to the service o' the Almighty, and the guid o' his craturs. My first step will be to gang to Edinburgh, and pay back to Andrew Gavin the price o' the damaged linen he purchased frae me, and to settle the tavern bill at The Barleycorn, to assist me whereunto ye will dootless gie me back my siller. This resolution I confirm thus.” And he flung the whisky into the furnace, which blazed up, a kind of holocaust, as a thanksgiving for the regeneration of a sinner.

Duncan Schulebred's money was paid back to him honestly, and the actors were well pleased that they had, out of their amusement, wrought so extraordinary a miracle. The regenerated man departed from the glass-works,

and proceeded, according to his intention, direct to Edinburgh. He called first at Andrew Gavin's house.

"Is Mr. Gavin within?" said he to Mrs. Gavin.

"My husband," said the disconsolate wife, "has not been at home all night. The last time I saw him was when he departed with you. What have you done with him? I fear some sad mischief has befallen him; for unless he is at a proof or after a *fugy*, he never stays out of his own house at night. But what kind of linen was that ye sold him?"

"It was a piece o' *rotten* linen I sauld him," replied Duncan Schulebred.

Mrs. Gavin looked at him in amazement.

"Ay, and," he continued, "your husband is dootless locked up in The Barleycorn, because he couldna—puir man!—pay the lawin that I should hae paid, and ran awa and left him to pay."

Mrs. Gavin's amazement was increased.

"Ay, and," continued he, "I hae cheated thoosands besides you and yer husband—a greater sinner than I hae been, ye wadna find between the Mull o' Galloway and John o' Groats. If I had got my due, I wad hae been hanged, or at least sent to Botany Bay."

"Are you mad, or do you glory in your wickedness?" said Mrs. Gavin.

"Nane o' the twa," said Duncan. "I am as wise as ye are; and, in place o' gloryin in my wickedness, I am as repentant as a deein martyr."

"Repentance is nothing without works," replied she.

"Warks!" ejaculated Duncan. "Bring, bring me the rotten linen."

The astonished woman went and brought the article.

"There's the siller," said Duncan, "I got fra yer husband for that wab. I'll sell it noo for what it is—a piece o' vile deception. Need ye a commodity o' that description?"

"I think I could find use for it," said Mrs. Gavin. "It has one good end, but you will come to an ill one when you"—"roll it down," she would have said, but Duncan caught her:—

"When ye cheat yer neighbour," added he. "Ye're quite right, madam; a rotten-hearted wab is just like a rotten-hearted man—they baith come to an ill *end*. Oh, hoo gratefu I am to thae glass-blawers, wha hae blawn awa my crimes, and converted and reformed me!"

"He is surely mad, after all," muttered Mrs. Gavin, to herself—"who ever heard of glass-blowers converting sinners? I have always understood that glass-blowers are free livers, and need repentance themselves as much as other folk. How could they convert you, man?"

"There are strange mysteries i' the warld," said Duncan; "but we will better let that subject alone. We only, after a', see 'as through a glass darkly.' Stick to the linen—what is it worth?"

Mrs. Gavin stated a price, Duncan accepted her offer, and the damaged linen was sold.

"Noo," said Duncan, "I'll send ye her husband."

"I will be obliged to you," said Mrs. Gavin; "and if you can get the glass-blowers to give him a blast, your kindness would be increased far beyond my poor powers of recompense.

"Ah, madam," said Duncan, "writers are owre well accustomed to *blasts o' the horn*, to care for ordinary windfa's. I ken nae better thing for an ill husband (no sayin that Andrew is liable to that charge) than a blast o' a wife's tongue. God be praised, Janet Schulebred will hae nae mair cause to lecture me! We will now live happily durin the remaining portion o' the time o' oor pilgrimage. I hae aye taen something hame to her. Last year I took some whisky bottles—probably made at the glass-warks o' Leith; this time I intend to tak a family Bible. Guid day, madam,

I'm awa to The Barleycorn ; and frae that I gang to a Bible repository, and then hame."

He repaired to The Barleycorn. He saw the landlord standing at the door, with a sombre face. He had the key of the room in his hand, and looked the very picture of a jailor. He knew Duncan instantly, and was proceeding to seize him, when the latter surrendered himself with so much good humour that the publican gave up his purpose and smiled at the prospect of getting his money.

" You forgot to come back last night," said the man. " Mr. Gavin says that you were the principal debtor to me for my drink, and that he was merely surety or cautioner. Is that true ? "

" Perfectly true," replied Duncan. " I promised to pay the bill, and should hae paid the bill ; but I was determined I wadna pay the bill. Accordingly, I ran awa for nae ither purpose than to avoid payin it."

" A trick ye'll no play a second time," said the publican seizing him.

" No," said Duncan, taking out the money, " seein I am come to pay ye plack and farthin. Let us adjourn to Mr. Gavin's prison."

" The vera place I intended to tak ye to," said the man.

They proceeded to the room where Andrew was confined, and found him sitting in a sombre fit of melancholy. As they entered, he looked at Duncan with an appearance of mixed anger and satisfaction. The latter feeling predominated, as his mind suggested that the poor weaver had been prevented by drunkenness from returning immediately to pay the bill, and had now come to make amends.

" I have been angry at you, Duncan," said he ; " but I might have had more faith in your honour, than to doubt you, without better proof of dishonesty than not returning (when you were not able) to pay your debts."

"Ye couldna hae a better proof o' my dishonesty," replied Duncan, sternly; "for, last nicht, when I ran awa withoot payin the lawin, I had nae mair intention o' comin back than I had o' gangin doun to the bottomless pit."

Andrew looked at the speaker with the same amazement as was exhibited by his wife.

"How comes it, then," said the writer, "that thou hast returned here this morning?"

"I hae got some new *licht*," replied Andrew. "Ye ken—

'So long's the lamp hold's on to burn
The greatest sinner may return.'

I hae returned, no only to this tavern to pay my debt, but to a proper sense o' what is due to Heaven and to my fellow-creatures. I am a changed man, sir. Nae 'vision o' judgment,' penned by Southee or Byron, ever transcended that o' the bottle-blawers o' Leith."

The writer considered him mad, and trembled for the payment of the bill, which could not be extorted from a maniac. The tavern-keeper took a calmer view, and thought he was still drunk.

"What are ye starin at?" said Duncan. "Did ye never before see a repentant sinner? Bring yer bill, sir. And, Mr. Gavin, I refer ye to Mrs. Gavin for some information, regarding a wab o' rotten linen I sauld ye yesterday, bought back again, and sauld again to her this mornin."

The tavern-keeper brought the bill, which Duncan discharged.

"I cheated ye, Mr. Gavin, also o' the price o' the stirrup-cup."

"Let us drink it now," said Mr. Gavin—"Bring us a gill"—to the tavern-keeper.

The whisky was brought, and the writer took cleverly

his morning dram, a practice which the craft has latterly renounced, but which they should have recourse to again, as a glass of whisky is a good beginning to a day's roguery, and has, besides, sometimes the same effect upon the conscience that it produces on the toothache—stills the pain. A glass was next filled out for Duncan. He took it up and held it in his hand.

"Your fire's no sae guid as the ane I saw last nicht," he said to the tavern-keeper.

"It is only newly lighted," was the apology of the host.

"It may be the better o' that," said the other, throwing the whisky into the grate, and making the fire blaze up "Sae should a' burnin, fiery liquors be used. They might then warm the outsides, in place o' burnin the insides o' sinners. Ye hae seen some o' the first acts o' my repentance. This is ane o' them. Ye may hear and sae mair, if ye consider Duncan Schulebred worthy o' yer consideration, and trace his conduct through this weary, wicked, waefu warld, during the remainin period o' an ill-begun but (I hope) weel-ended life."

A R C H Y A R M S T R O N G.

FOR thirty years Sandy Armstrong of the Cleughfoot had been one of the most daring and successful freebooters of his clan. His name was a sound of terror on the Borders, and was alike disagreeable to Scotch and English ears; for, like Esau, Sandy's hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him. His clan had been long broken and without a leader, and the Armstrongs were regarded as outlaws by both nations. Cleughfoot, in which Sandy resided, was a small square building of prodigious strength; around it was a court-yard, or rather an enclosure for cattle, surrounded by a massy wall, in which was an iron gate strong as the wall itself. The door of the dwelling was also of iron, and the windows, which were scarce larger than loop-holes, were barred. It was generally known by the name of "Lang Sandy's *Keep*," and was situated on the side of the Tarras, about ten miles from Langholm. Around it was a desolate morass, the passes of which were known only to Sandy and his few followers, and beyond the morass was a decaying but almost impenetrable forest. Sandy, like his forefathers, knew no law, save

"The good old law—the simple plan—
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

He had had seven sons, and of these five had fallen while following him in the foray, the sixth had been devoured by a blood-hound, and he had but one, Archy, his youngest, left, to whom he could bequeath his stronghold, a fleet steed, and his sword. Land he had none, and he knew

not its value: he found it more profitable to levy black-mail, to the right and to the left, on Englishman and on Scot; and he laughed at the authority of Elizabeth and of James, and defied the power of the Wardens of their Marches—"Bess may be Queen o' England," said he, "and book-learned Jamie, King o' braid Scotland, but Sandy Armstrong is lord o' the wilds o' Tarras."

On the death of Elizabeth, Sandy and his handful of retainers had been out in the raid to Penrith; in that desperate attempt, some of them had fallen, and others had been seized and executed at Carlisle. But Sandy had escaped, driving his booty through the wilds before him to Cleughfoot. On one side of the court-yard stood a score of oxen and six fleet steeds, and on the other was provender for them for many days. On the flat roof of Cleughfoot Keep sat Sandy Armstrong; before him was a wooden stoup filled with *aqua vitae*, and in his hand he held a small quegh, neatly hooped round, and formed of wood of various colours. It had a short handle for the finger and thumb, was about two inches in diameter, and three quarters of an inch in depth, and out of this vessel Sandy, ever and anon, quaffed his strong potations, while his son, Archy, a boy of twelve years old, stood by his side, receiving from his parent a Borderer's education. But, leaving the freebooter and his son on the turret of their fastness, we shall also, for a few moments, leave Dumfriesshire, and carrying back our narrative for some weeks, introduce the reader to the ancient town of Berwick-upon-Tweed.

On Wednesday, the 8th of April, 1603, every soul in the good town of Berwick was up by daybreak;—wife and maiden flaunted in their newest gowns, with ample fardingsales, and the sweating mechanic looked as spruce in his well brushed "jack," as a courtly cavalier. By sunrise, the cannon thundered from the ramparts. Before noon, the Marshal, Sir John Carey, at the head of the garrison,

composed of horse and foot, marched out of the town towards Lamberton, firing *feu-d'-joies* as they went, while the cannon still pealed and the people shouted. The thunder of the artillery became more frequent—the bells rang merrily—the volleys of the garrison became louder and more loud, as though they again approached, and “He comes!—He comes!” shouted the crowd; “Hurra! Hurra!—the King! the King!” The garrison again entered the town, they filed to the right and left, lining the street. In front of Marygate stood William Selby, the gentleman porter, with the keys of the town. The voice of the artillery, the muskets, and the multitude, again mingled together. James of Scotland and of England stood before the gate—Selby bent upon his knee, he placed the keys of the town in the hands of the monarch, who instantly returned them, saying, “Rise, Sir William Selby, an’ saul o’ me, man, but ye should take it as nae sma’ honour to be the first knight made by James, by the grace of God, an’ the love o’ our gracious cousin, King o’ England an’ Scotland likewise.” His Majesty, followed by the multitude, proceeded down Marygate, through the files of the garrison, to the market-place, where the worshipful Hugh Gregson, the mayor, his brother aldermen, the bailiffs, and others of the principal burgesses, waited to receive him. The mayor knelt and presented him with a purse of gold and the corporation’s charter. “Ye are a leal and considerate gentleman,” said the king, handing the purse to one of his attendants—“worthy friends are ye a’; and now take back your charter, an’ ye sall find in us a gracious and affectionate sovereign, ready to maintain the liberty and privileges it confers upon our trusty subjects o’ our town o’ Berwick.” Mr. Christopher Parkinson, the recorder, then delivered a set and solemn speech, after which the king proceeded to the church, where the Rev. Toby Mathews, Bishop of Durham, preached a sermon suited to royal ears.

On the following day, the demonstrations of rejoicing were equally loud, and his Majesty visited the garrison and fortifications; and as he walked upon the ramparts surrounded by lords from Scotland and from England, and while the people shouted, and the artillery belched forth fire, smoke, and thunder, the monarch, in order to give an unquestionable demonstration of his courage, in the presence of his new subjects, boldly advanced to the side of one of the cannon, and took the match from the hands of the soldier who was about to fire it. Once—twice—thrice, the monarch stretched forth his hand to the touch-hole, but touched it not. It was evident the royal hand trembled—the royal eyes were closed—yea, the royal cheeks became pale. At length the quivering match touched the powder, back bounded the thundering cannon, and back sprang the terrified monarch, knocking one of his attendants down—dropping the match upon the ground, and thrusting his fingers in his ears—stammering out, as plainly as his throbbing heart would permit, that “he feared their drum was split in twa!” Scarce had his Majesty recovered from this demonstration of his bravery, when a messenger arrived with the intelligence that the Armstrongs and other clans had committed grievous depredations on the Borders, and had even carried their work of spoliation and plunder as far as Penrith.

“ Borders, man!” quoth the king, “our kingdom hath nae *borders* but the sea. It is our royal pleasure that the word *borders* sall never mair be used: wat ye not that what were the *extremities* or *borders* o’ the twa kingdoms, are but the *middle* o’ our kingdom, an’ in future it is our will an’ decree that ye ca’ them nae langer the borders, but the *middle* counties. An’ now, Sir William Selby, as we were graciously pleased yesterday by our ain hand, to confer on ye the high honour o’ knighthood, take ye twa hundred and fifty horsemen, and gae ye up our middle counties, com-

manding every true man in our name, capable o' bearing arms, to join ye in crushing and in punishing sic thieves and rievers ; hang ilka Armstrong and Johnstone amang them that resists our royal will—an' make the iron yetts o' their towers be converted into ploughshares. Away, sir, an' do your wark surely an' right quickly."

On the following day, Sir William Selby set out upon his mission ; and before he had proceeded far, he found himself at the head of a thousand horsemen. They burned and destroyed the strongholds of the Borderers, as they went, and the more desperate amongst them who fell into their hands were sent in fetters to Carlisle.

It was early in May, and the young leaves, bursting into beauty and being, were spreading their summer livery over Tarras forest, and the breeze wafted their grateful fragrance over the morass ; even on the morass itself, a thousand simple flowers, like fragments of beauty scattered in handfuls amidst the wide-spread desolation, peeped forth ; and over the sharp cry of the wheeling lapwing rang the summer hymn of the joyful lark, when, as we have said before, Sandy Armstrong sat on the turret of Cleughfoot with his son by his side.

" Archy," said the freebooter, " this warld is turning upside down, an' honest men hae nae chance in't. We hear o' naething noo but law ! law ! law !—but the fient a grain o' justice is to be met wi' on the Borders. A man canna take a bit beast or twa in an honest way, or make a bonfire o' an enemy's haystack, but there's naethin' for't but Carlisle and a hempen cravat. But mind, callant, ye ha'e the bluid o' the Armstrongs in your veins, and their hands never earned bread by ony instrument but the sword, and it winna be the son o' Sandy o' Cleughfoot that will disgrace his kith and kin by trudging at a ploughtail, or learning some beggarly handicraft. Swear to me, Archy, that ye will live by the sword like your faithers afore ye

—swear to your faither, callant, an' fear neither Jamie Stuart, his twa kingdoms, nor his horsemen—they'll ha'e stout hearts that cross Tarras moss, and there will be few sheep in Liddesdale before the pot at Cleughfoot need nae skimming."

"I will live like my faither before me—king o' Tarraside," said the youth.

"That shall ye, Archy," rejoined the freebooter; "an' though the Scotts an' the Elliots may, like fause louns, make obeisance to the king, and get braid lands for bending their knees, what cares Sandy Armstrong for their lands, their manrents, or their sheep-skins, scrawled owre by a silk-fingered monk—his twa-handed blade and his Jeddart-staff shall be a better title to an Armstrong than an acre o' parchment."

The boy caught the spirit of his sire, and flourished his Jedburgh-staff, or battle-axe, in his hand. The father raised the quegh to his lips—"Here's to ye, Archy," he cried, "ye'll be cooper o' Fogo!"

He crossed his arms upon his breast—he sat thoughtful for a few minutes, and again added—"Archy—but my heart fills to look on ye—ye are a brave bairn, but this is nae langer the brave man's country. Courage is persecuted, and knaves only are encouraged, that can scribble like the monks o' Melrose. Ye had sax brithers, Archy—sax lads whase marrows warna to be found on a' the lang Borders—wi' them at my back an' I could hae ridden north and south, an' made the name o' Sandy Armstrong be feared; but they are gane—they're a' gane, and there's nane left but you to protect and defend your poor mother when I am gane too; and now they would hunt me like a deer if they durst, for they are butchering guid and true men for our bit raid to Penrith, as though the life o' an Armstrong were o' less value than an English nowt. If ye live to be a man, Archy, and to see your poor auld mother's head

laid in the mould, take my sword and leave this poor, pitiful, king-ridden, an' book-ruined country; an' dinna ye disgrace your faither by makin' bickers like the coopers o' Nicolwood, or pinglin' wi' an elshin like the souters o' Selkirk."

The sleuth-dog, which lay at their feet, started up, snuffed the air, growled and lashed its tail. "Ha! Tiger! what is't, Tiger?" cried Sandy, addressing the dog, and springing to his feet.

"Troopers! troopers, faither!" cried Archy, "an' they are comin' frae ilka side o' the forest."

"Get ready the dags,* Archy," said the freebooter; "it's twa lang spears' length to the bottom o' Tarras moss, an' they'll be light men and lighter horses that find na a grave in't--get ready the dags, and cauld lead shall welcome the first man that mentions King Jamie's name before the walls o' Cleughfoot."

The boy ran and brought his father's pistols—his mother accompanied him to the turret. She gazed earnestly on the threatening bands of horsemen as they approached, for a few seconds, then taking her husband's hand—"Sandy," said she, "I hae lang looked for this; but others that are wives the now shall gang widows to bed the night, as well as Elspeth Armstrong!"

"Fear naething, Elspeth, my doo," replied the riever; "there will be blood in the way if they attack the lion in his den. But there's a lang and tangled moss between them an' Cleughfoot. We hae seen an enemy nearer an' be glad to turn back again."

"They will reach us, faither," cried Archy; "do ye no see they hae muffled men before them?"

"Muffled men! then, bairn, your faither's betrayed!" exclaimed the freebooter, "an' there's naething but revenge and death left for Sandy Armstrong!"

*Pistols.

He stalked rapidly around the turret—he examined his pistols, the edge of his sword, his Jedburgh-staff, and his spear. Elspeth placed a steel cap on his head, and, from beneath it, his dark hair, mingled with grey, fell upon his brow. He stood with his ponderous spear in one hand and a pistol in the other, and the declining sun cast his shadow across the moss, to the very horses' feet of his invaders. Still the horsemen, who amounted to several hundreds, drew nearer and nearer on every side, and impenetrable as the morass was to strangers, yet, by devious windings, as a hound tracks its prey, the muffled men led them on, till they had arrived within pistol shot of Cleughfoot.

“What want ye, friends?” shouted the outlaw—“think ye that a poor man like Sandy Armstrong can gi'e upputtin' and provender for five hundred horse?”

“We come,” replied an officer, advancing in front of the company, “by the authority o' our gracious prince, James, king o' England and Scotland, and in the name o' his commissioner, Sir William Selby, to punish and hand over to justice Border thieves and outlaws, o' whom we are weel assured that you, Sandy Armstrong, o' the Cleughfoot, are habit and repute, amangst the chief.”

“Ye lie! ye lie!” returned the outlaw; “ye dyvors in scarlet an' cockades, ye lie! I hae lived thir fifty years by my ain hand, an' the man was never born that dared say Sandy Armstrong laid finger on the widow's cow or the puir man's mare, or that he scrimpit the orphan's meal. But I hae been a protector o' the poor and helpless, an' a defender o' the cowan-hearted, for a sma' but honest black-mail, that other men, wi' no half the strength o' Sandy Armstrong, wadna ta'en up at their foot.

“Do ye surrender in peace, ye boastin' rebel?” replied the herald, “or shall we burn your den about your ears?”

“I ken it is death ony way ye take it,” rejoined the outlaw—“ye would show me an' mine the mercv that

was shown to my kinsman, John o' Gilnokie,* and I shall surrender as an Armstrong surrenders—when the breath is out."

Fire flashed from a narrow crevice which resembled a cross in the turrets—the report of a pistol was heard, and the horse of the herald bounded, and fell beneath him.

"That wasna done like an Armstrong, Archy," said the freebooter; "ye hae shot the horse, an' it might hae been the rider—the man was but doing his duty, an' it was unfair and cowardly to fire on him till the affray began.

"I shall mind again, faither," said Archy, "but I thought, wi' sic odds against us, that every advantage was fair."

While these events transpired, Elspeth was busied placing powder and balls upon the roof of the turret; she brought up also a carabine, and putting it in her husband's hands, said—"Tak ye that, Sandy, to aim at their leaders, and gie Archy an' me the dags."

The horsemen encompassed the wall; Sandy, his wife, and his son, knelt upon the turret, keeping up, through the crevices, a hurried but deadly fire on the besiegers. It was evident the assailants intended to blow up the wall. The freebooter beheld the train laid, and the match applied. Already his last bullet was discharged. "Let us fire the straw among the cattle!" cried little Archy. "Weel thought, my bairn!" exclaimed the riever. The boy rushed down into the house, and in an instant returned with a flaming pine torch in his hand. He dropped it amongst the cattle. He dashed a handful of powder on the spot, and in a moment half of the court-yard burst into a flame. At the same instant a part of the court-wall trembled—exploded—fell. The horned cattle and the horses were rushing wildly to and fro through the fire. The invaders

* This subject forms another of the Border Tales.

burst through the gap. Elspeth tore a pearl drop from her ears,* and, thrusting it into the pistol, discharged it at the head of the first man who approached the house. It was evident they intended to blow up the house, as they had done the wall. Sandy had now no weapon that he could render effective but his spear, and he said—"They shall taste the prick of the hedgehog before I die." He thrust it down furiously upon them, and several of them fell at his threshold, but the deadly instrument was grasped by a number of the besiegers, and wrenched from his hands.

The sun had already set, darkness was gathering over the morass, and still the fire burned, and the cattle rushed amongst the armed men in the court-yard.

"Elspeth," said the freebooter, "it is not your life they seek, and they canna hae the heart to harm our bairn. Gie me my Jeddard-staff in my hand—an' fareweel to ye, Elspeth—fareweel!—an eternal fareweel! Archy, fareweel, my gallant bairn!—never disgrace yer faither!—but ye winna—ye winna—an' if I am murdered, mind ye revenge me, Archy! Now we maun unbar the door, and I maun cut my way through them or perish."

Thus spoke the Borderer, and with his battle-axe in his hand, he embraced his wife and his son, and wept. "Now, Archy," said he, "slip and open the door—saftly!—saftly!—an' let me rush out."

Archy silently drew back the massy bars; in a moment the iron door stood ajar, and Sandy Armstrong, battle-axe in hand, burst into the court-yard, and into the midst of his besiegers. There was not a man amongst them that had not heard of the "terrible Jeddart-staff o' Sandy Armstrong." He cleaved them down before him—his very voice augmented their confusion—they shrank back at his

* The wives and daughters of the Borderers, at this period, wore numerous trinkets—spoils, no doubt, presented them by their husbands and wooers.

approach ; and while some fled from the infuriated cattle, others fled from the arm of the freebooter. In a few seconds he reached the gap in the court-wall—he rushed upon the moss ;—darkness had begun, and a thick vapour was rising from the morass. “Follow me who dare !” shouted Sandy Armstrong.

Archy withdrew into a niche in the passage, as his father rushed out ;—and as the besiegers speedily burst into the house, amongst them was one of the muffled men* bearing a torch in his hand. Revenge fired the young Borderer, and, with his Jedburgh-staff, he made a dash at the hand of the traitor. The torch fell upon the floor, and with it three of the fingers that grasped it. The besiegers were instantly enveloped in gloom, and Archy, escaping from the niche from whence he had struck the blow, said unto himself—“I’ve gien ye a mark to find out who you are, neighbour.”

The besiegers took possession of Cleughfoot, and the chief men of the party remained in it during the night, while a portion of their followers occupied the court-yard, and others, with their horses, remained on the morass. Archy and his mother were turned from their dwelling, and placed under a guard upon the moss, where they remained throughout the night ; and, in the morning, Cleughfoot was blown up before them. They were conveyed as prisoners to Sir William Selby, who had fixed his quarters near Langholm.

“Whom do ye bring me here ?” inquired the new-made knight ; “a wife and bairn !—Hae ye been catching sparrows and let the eagle escape ?—Whar hae ye the head and the hand o’ the outlaw ?”

“Troth, Sir Knight,” replied an officer, “and his head

* A muffled man was one who, for his future safety, assumed a mask or disguise in leading the enemy to the haunt of his neighbours or associates whom he betrayed.

is where it shouldna be—on his ain shouthers. At the darkenin' he escaped upon the moss; three troopers, guided by a muffler and a sleuth-dog, pursued him; an' as we crossed the bog this mornin', we found ane o' the troopers sunk to the middle in't, an' his horse below him; and far'er on were the dead bodies o' the other twa, the sleuth-dog, and the muffled man. I am sorry, therefore, to inform ye, Sir Knight, that Sandy Armstrong has escaped, but we hae made a bonefire o' his keep, an' brought ye his wife and his son—wha are Armstrongs, soul and body o' them—to do wi' them as ye may judge proper."

"Tuts, man," replied Sir William, "wad he hae us to disgrace our royal commission by hangin' an auld wife an a bairn? Gae awa, ye limmer, ye—gae awa wi' your brat," he added, addressing Elspeth, "an' learn to live like honest folk; or, if ye fa' in my way again, ye shall dance by the crook frae a woodie."

"Where can I gang?" said she sorrowfully, as she withdrew. "O Archy! we hae neither house nor hauld—friend nor kindred!—an' wha will shelter the wife and bairn o' poor persecuted Sandy Armstrong!"

"Dinna fret, mother," said Archy; "though they hae burned Cleughfoot, the stanes are still left, an' I can soon big a bit place to stop in; nor, while there's a hare in Tarras wood, or a sheep on the Leadhills, shall ye ever want, mother.

They returned in sorrow to the heap of ruins that had been their habitation; and Elspeth, in the bitterness of her spirit, sat down upon the stones and wept. But after she had wept long, and the sound of her lamentation had howled across the desert, she arose and assisted her son in constructing a hut from the ruins, in which they might lay their heads. In two days it was completed, but, on the third day, the disconsolate wife of the freebooter sank

on her bed of rushes, and the sickness of death was in her heart.

"Oh, speak to me, mother!" cried Archy; "what—what can I do for ye?"

"Naethin', my bairn!—naethin'!" groaned the dying woman—"the sun's fa'in dark on the een o' Elspeth Armstrong; but, oh, may the saunts o' heaven protect my poor Archy!"

She tried to repeat the only prayer she had ever learned—for religion was as little understood in the house of a free-booter as the eighth commandment. Poor Archy wrung his hands and sobbed aloud.

"Dinna die, mother—oh! dinna die!" he exclaimed, "or what will become o' your Archy!" He rushed from the hut, and with a broken vessel which he had found among the ruins, he brought water from the rivulet. He applied it to her lips—he bathed her brow—"O mother! mother, dinna die!" he cried again, "and I will get you bread too!" He again hurried from the hut, and bounded across the moss with the fleetness of a young deer. It was four long miles to the nearest habitation, and in it dwelt Ringan Scott, a dependent of the Buccleuchs. There had never been friendship between his family and that of Sandy Armstrong, but, in the agony of Archy's feelings, he stopped not to think of that nor of aught but his dying mother. He rushed into the house—"Gie me bread!" he exclaimed wildly, "for the love o' heaven gie me bread, for my mother is perishin'!"

"Let her perish!—an may ye a' perish!" said a young man, the son of Ringan, who stood by the fire with his right hand in a sling, "ye's get nae bread here."

"I maun!—I shall!" cried Archy, vehemently. Half of a coarse cake lay upon the table; he snatched it up, and rushed out of the house. They pursued him for a time, but affection and despair gave wings to his speed. Breath-

less, he reached the wretched hut, and, on entering, he cried—"Mother, here is bread! I have gotten't! I have gotten't!" But his mother answered him not. "Speak, mother! O mother, speak! here is bread now—eat it an' ye'll be better," he cried, but his mother was still silent. He took her hand in his—"Are ye sleepin', mother?" he added—"here is bread!" He shook her gently, but she stirred not. He placed his hand upon her face; it was cold as the rude walls of the hut, and her extended arms were stiff and motionless. He raised them, and they fell heavily and lifeless. "Mother!—mother!" screamed Archy; but his mother was dead! He rushed from the hut wildly, tearing his hair—he flung himself upon the ground—he called upon his father, and the glens of Tarras echoed the cry; but no father was near to answer. He flew back to the hut. He knelt by his mother's corpse—he rubbed her face and her bosom—he placed his lips to hers, and again he invoked her to speak. Night drew on, and, as darkness fell over the ghastly features of the corpse, he fled with terror from the hut, and wandered weeping throughout the night upon the moss. At sunrise he returned, and again sat down and wept by the dead body of his mother. He became familiar with death, and his terror died away. Two nights more passed on, and the boy sat in the desolate hut in the wilderness, watching and mourning over the lifeless body of his mother. On the fourth day, he took a fragment of the iron gate, and began to dig her grave. He raised the dead body in his arms, and weeping, screaming, as he went, he bore it to the tomb he had prepared for it. He gently placed it in the cold earth, and covered it with the moss and the green sod. All the day long he toiled in rolling and carrying stones from the ruins of his father's house, to erect a cairn over his mother's grave. When his task was done, he wrung his hands, and exclaimed, "Now, poor

Archy Armstrong hasna a friend in the wide world!" While he yet stood mourning over the new-made grave, a party of horsemen, who were still in quest of his father, rode up and accosted him. His tragic tale was soon told, and, in the bitterness of his heart, he accused them as being the murderers of his father and his mother. Amongst them was one of the chief men of the Elliot clan, who held lands in the neighbourhood. He felt compassion for Archy, and he admired his spirit; and, desiring him to follow him, he promised to provide for him. Archy reluctantly obeyed, and he was employed to watch the sheep of his protector on the hills.

Eighteen years passed away. Archy was now thirty years of age; he had learned to read, and even to write, like the monks that were in Melrose. He was the principal herdsman of his early benefactor, and was as much beloved as his father had been feared. But at times the spirit of the freebooter would burst forth; and he had not forgiven the persecutors, or, as he called them, the murderers of his parents. Amongst these was one called "Fingerless Dick," the son of Ringan Scott, of whom we have spoken. Archy had long known that he was one of the muffled men who had conducted Selby's horsemen to his father's house, and that he was the same from whose hand he had dashed the torch with his battle-axe. Now, there was to be a football fray in Liddesdale, and the Borderers thronged to it from many miles. Archy was there, and there also was his enemy—"Fingerless Dick." They quarrelled—they closed—both came to the ground, but Scott was undermost. He drew his knife—he stabbed his antagonist in the side—he was repeating the thrust, when Archy wrenched the weapon from his hand, and, in the fury of the moment, plunged it in his breast. At first the wound was believed to be mortal, and an attempt was made to seize Archy, but clutching an oaken cudgel from the hands of one who stood near him—

“Lay hands on me wha dare!” he cried, as he brandished it in the air, and fled at his utmost speed.

Archy knew that though his enemy might recover, the Scotts would let loose the tender mercies of the law upon his head, and instead of returning to the house of his master, he sought safety in concealment.

On the third day after the fray in Liddesdale, he entered Dumfries. He was weary and wayworn, for he had fled from hill to hill, and from glen to glen, fearing pursuit. He inquired for a lodging, and was shown to a small house near the foot of a street leading to the river, and which, we believe, is now called the Bank Vennel; and in which, he was told, “the pig folk and other travellers put up for the night.” There was a motley group in the house, beggars and chapmen, and amongst the former was an old man of uncommon stature; and his hair, as white as snow, descended down upon his shoulders. His beard was of equal whiteness, and fell upon his breast. An old grey cloak covered his person, which was fastened round his body with a piece of rope instead of a girdle. He appeared as one who had been in foreign wars, and he wore a shade or patch over his left eye. He spoke but little, but he gazed often and wistfully on the countenance of Archy, and more than once a tear found its way down his weather-beaten cheeks. In the morning when Archy rose to depart, “Whither gang ye, young man?” inquired the old beggar, earnestly—“are ye for the north or for the south?”

“Wherefore spier ye, auld man?” replied Archy.

“I hae a cause, an’ ane that winna harm ye,” said the stranger, “if ye will thole an auld man’s company for a little way.”

Archy agreed that he should accompany him, and they took the road towards Annan together. It was a calm and glorious morning: the Solway flashed in the sunlight

like a silver lake, and not a cloud rested on the brow of the majestic Criffel. For the space of three miles they proceeded in silence, but the old man sighed oft and heavily, as though his spirit were troubled. "Let us rest here for a few minutes," said he, as he sat down on a green knoll by the way-side, and gazing steadfastly in Archy's face—"Young man," he added, "your face brings owre my heart the memories o' thirty years—and, oh! persecuted as the name is—answer me truly if your name be Armstrong?"

"It is!" replied Archy, "and perish the son o' Sandy Armstrong when he disowns it!"

"An' your faither—your mother," continued the old man, hesitating as he spoke—"do they—does she live?"

In a few words Archy told of his father's persecution—of his being hunted from the country like a wild beast—of the destruction of the home of his childhood—of his mother's death, and of her burial by his own hands in the wilderness.

"Oh! my poor Elspeth!" cried the aged beggar, "Archy! my son! my son! I am your faither! Sandy Armstrong, the outlaw!"

"My faither!" exclaimed Archy, pressing the beggar to his breast. When they had wept together,— "Let us gae nae farer south," said the old man, "but let us return to Tarras moss, that when the hand o' death comes, ye may lay me down in peace by the side of my Elspeth."

With a sorrowful heart Archy told his father that he was flying from the law and the vengeance of the Scotts. "Gie them gowd as a peace-offering," said the old man, and he pulled from beneath his coarse cloak a leathern purse, filled with gold, and placed it in the hands of his son. For nearly twenty years Sandy had served in foreign wars, and obtained honours and rewards; and on visiting his native land, he had assumed the beggar's garb for safety.

They returned to Tarras-side together, and a few yellow coins quashed the prosecution of “Fingerless Dick.” Archy married the daughter of his former employer, and became a sheep-farmer ; and, at the age of fourscore years and ten, the old freebooter closed his eyes in peace in the house of his son, and in the midst of his grandchildren, and was buried, according to his own request, by the side of Elspeth in the wilderness.

THE DOUBLE-BEDDED ROOM.

“Say you love
His person—be not ashame’d of’t; he’s a man,
For whose embraces, though Endymion
Lay sleeping by, Cynthia would leave her orb,
And exchange kisses with him.”

Massinger.

“THE morn was fair, the sky was clear,” when Mr. Andrew Micklewhame set his foot aboard one of the “Stirling, Alloa, and Kincardine Steam Company’s” boats, at the Chain Pier, Newhaven, for the purpose of proceeding to the first-named place, on a visit to his old friend, Davie Kerr, who had been, for upwards of twenty years, a respectable iron-monger in that romantic town. On reaching Alloa, however, where, as every one knows, the steamers pause for such length of time as enables them to take in a supply of coals, and the tide to run up, it began to rain, in the manner best expressed by the household phrase, “auld wives and pipe stapples.” Notwithstanding this, Andrew being determined to make the most of his time—for a week was the utmost limit of his leave of absence from the Edinburgh cloth establishment, in which he was in the habit of wearing away his days and his coat sleeves—ascended from the cabin where he had been luxuriating over the only volume—the first of “Wilson’s Tales of the Borders”—of which its library could boast; and unfurling his umbrella, walked ashore in the fond hope of seeing or hearing something worth the seeing or hearing. And Andrew was not disappointed; for, to his unspeakable delight, he descried against the gable-end of a white house, a play-bill, on which “Venice Preserved,” appeared in

letters of half-an-inch deep; the part of *Pierre*, by Mr. Ferdinand Gustavus Trash, and *Jaffier*, by Mr. Henry Watkins. The afterpiece, “*Rob Roy*.” Being extremely partial to theatrical amusements, of whatever description, and, moreover, being a contributor to a dramatic review, published weekly in the Scottish metropolis, it occurred to Mr. Andrew Micklewhame that here he might, in all probability, find materials sufficient on which to establish a funny critique, that would print to the extent of at least six of the twelve pages of the aforesaid dramatic review, and yield him good pay. Such an opportunity was not to be lost. He, therefore, resolved on remaining at Alloa that night to witness the performances, and proceeding to Stirling next morning by the earliest conveyance.

Having arranged this to his own content, he stalked majestically into an inn—without stopping to notice the sign which projected angularly over the door, bearing the representation of a ship in full sail, among emerald waves, with moon-rakers and sky-scrapers ingeniously mixed up with the indigo clouds above—and stoutly called for a pint of porter and a biscuit, to take the edge off his appetite. This inn rejoiced not in a landlord; he that *was* the landlord had, some twelve years before, taken himself off to “that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns;” and his widow had not been lucky enough to meet with another ready and willing to let himself become entangled with her in the meshes of matrimony. The waiters who had, in her husband’s time, been wont to serve the customers, had either died out, or gone to other and better situations, and left her with one solitary maid of all work—the same who had officiated as barmaid to the inn for fifteen years.

This maid of all work—Kirsty by name—was a tall, hard-featured woman, of—by her own acknowledgment—two-and-forty; not very tidy in her adornment, nor very

bewitching in her manner. She it was who brought Mr. Andrew Micklewhame the pint of porter and the biscuit.

"I suppose, my dear!" said Andrew—(he had been a gay deceiver in his youth, and, ever since that period, the phrase, "my dear!" had stuck to him, and always when speaking to a female did he use it)—"I suppose, my dear," continued he, "I can have tea, and a beef-steak, or something of that kind, to it, in"—(here he stopped, and looked at his watch, from which he ascertained that it was then half-past four o'clock)—"in an hour and a half; and, as I purpose staying here to-night, I should like a bed. Will you arrange this for me?"

"Ye can easily get yer tea, sir," said the woman of forty-two, looking pleased at being addressed, "my dear;" "but, as for the bed, unless ye like to sleep in a dooble-bedded room, we canna gie ye accomodation. The lad that sleeps in ane o' the beds, is a decent sort o' a callant. We dinna ken much aboot him though ; for he only comes here at nicht for his bed ; and in the mornings, after his breakfast, awa' he gangs, and we never sees his face till nicht again ; except upon the Sundays, when he aye has a party o' braw leddies an' gentlemen to dinner wi' him. He has leeved that way for a fortnicht or three weeks ; an' my mistress hasna been the woman to ask him for a penny. Fegs ! I'm thinkin' she has taen a notion o' the callant. What he is or what he diz we dinna ken, an' naebody can tell us."

"Mysterious being !" inwardly ejaculated (as the novelists' phrase goes) Mr. Micklewhame ; then turning to Kirsty, with an inquiring look, he said—"Is he genteel in appearance ? of good address ? of pleasing manner ? Is he"—

"Ou, ay !" was the reply ; "he's a' that—I never see'd a genteeler young man in a' my days ; and sae handsome too ; sic black whiskers, an' sae broad aboot the shouthers. My certie, he's a stalworth chiel. An', as for his address ; heth,

man, he often gies me a kiss in the mornings as he gangs oot, and promises me anither whan he comes back again. Ye needna be the least feared to sleep in the same room wi' him."

"Feared!" muttered Micklewhame. "Afraid of a man with black whiskers and broad shoulders! I flatter myself I never was afraid in my life." So saying, he elevated himself on his pins to the same degree as he rose at that moment in his own estimation. Then turning to the table whereon he had deposited his hat, he seized it up, and, with a dexterous jerk, stuck it on his head, at the same time exclaiming—"You may prepare the bed for me—I'll sleep in the room with this mysterious man; and, while the tea is getting ready, I'll just take a short stroll."

With these words he left the inn.

Mr. Andrew Micklewhame was a middle-aged man, with a rotundity of corpus, and a bachelor to boot. In his youthful days his love for the fair sex had partaken more of a general than a particular character; and now that he had arrived at the meridian of life, his taste had grown too particular for him to choose a partner for the remainder of his days from among those unmarried ladies whom he ranked among his acquaintances. "Girls," he would say, "are not now half so pretty, nor half so domestic, as they were in my young days." Then he would enter into a long tirade against the march of intellect, usually ending with a few observations upon pianoforte playing, and cooking a beef-steak, the latter accomplishment being in his opinion—as it is in that of every well-thinking person—the greater accomplishment of the two. One lady was too young; another was too old; a third was too tall; a fourth was too small; a fifth had no money; a sixth *had* money, but was downright ugly; a seventh was ill-tempered: in short, with every one on whom his matrimonial ideas had condescended to scuttle, he had some fault to find.

There is no pleasing one who is predetermined not to be pleased.

Once, indeed, at a party to which he had been accidentally invited, he had felt a kind of a sort of a nervous tremulousness come over him on being set down at the supper table beside a lady, who, he discovered, was a widow; not fromner garb, however; for widows—that is, young widows free of encumbrance—usually dress themselves in a much gayer manner than they were wont to do when “nice young maidens.” He had made himself as agreeable as it was in his power to do, drinking wine with her at least half-a-dozen times, and otherwise doing, as he supposed, “the polite.” Nay, he even went so far as to volunteer his services in seeing her home; and on the way over (she was from the country, and, *pro tempore*, resided with a friend in Bruntisfield Place, fronting the Links), he had the boldness to pop the question. He was accepted, and invited to breakfast with the lady the following morning. The morning came; but Andrew did not go—the fumes of the wine having subsided, and “Richard being himself again.” He had taken a second thought on the subject, and determined on remaining a bachelor; by which arrangement the Widow Brown was, like Lord Ullin for his daughter, “left lamenting.” Who her husband had been? whether she had money? what was her situation in life? were what Andrew tried long and earnestly to discover, but in vain—the Widow Brown seemed wrapped in mystery; and, from that hour, when he imprinted a kiss upon her lips, under a lamp-post, at two o’clock in the morning, in Bruntisfield Place, he had neither seen nor heard of her. Years—six in number—had elapsed since then, and Andrew had not ventured to accept another invitation to an evening party; but, as soon as his business for the day was over, he returned to his solitary lodging in Richmond Street; and, for the remainder of the evening, followed the example of the

gentlemen of England, and “lived at home at ease,” never stirring out, except to pay an occasional visit to the theatre.

The localities of Alloa were quite unknown to Andrew, for the best reason in the world—he had never been in it before; but, by dint of attending to the usual expedient resorted to on like occasions—that of following his nose—in the space of a few minutes he discovered that his feet, or fate, had led him into a dockyard, where a vessel was just upon the point of being wedded to the ocean. Some women and men—the former, as usual, predominant—were seated on logs beneath a shed; others, the more impatient seemingly, were walking about with umbrellas and parasols above their heads—young men with young misses—old men and babes. Children in their first childhood, of various shapes and sizes, chiefly barefooted, were scampering among the wet sawdust, round about the logs of wood, in the shed and out of it, quite absorbed in the spirit-stirring game of “tig”—ever and anon yelping out each other’s names, and otherwise expressing their joy at not being “it.” Among their seniors there was a great deal of gabble to very little purpose, with a preponderate share of bustle and agitation.

Carpenters were thumping away at the blocks on which the vessel rested, making more noise than progress. At length the blocks were fairly driven out, and away boomed the vessel into the Forth, amid the cheers of the assembled spectators. The general interest then subsided; and in a few minutes thereafter, with exception of the carpenters and some stray children, the dockyard presented the picture of emptiness. The din had ended; and the multitude, reversing the condition of Rob Roy, had left desolation where they had found plenty.

Tea over, Mr. Andrew Micklewhame, having first seen to his accommodation for the night, and secured a place in the Stirling omnibus, which was advertised to start the next morning precisely at nine, wended his way quietly

to the theatre. It was in the Assembly Room—a rumbling old mansion, on the windows of which “time’s effacing fingers” had taken *pains* to leave their mark so effectually, that sundry detachments of old soot-bedizzened “clouts” filled up those interstices where glass had once been. “The nonpareil company of comedians” entertained their audiences and held their orgies on the second floor—the first being occupied as an academy, where “young gentlemen are taken in and done for.” The scenes in which the establishment rejoiced were five in number. Luckily, “Venice Preserved” did not require so many; but in “Rob Roy” the manager was compelled to make them perform double duty; and, consequently, the same scene was thrust on for the inside of a village inn apartment in Bailie Nicol Jarvie’s, and the interior of Jean M’Alpine’s change-house. The audience department was most gorgeous; there were boxes, pit, and gallery; or, in other words, front, middle, and back seats—the term “boxes” being applied to the front form, to which there was a back attached, most aristocratically garnished with green cloth, with brass nails in relief. At the farther end of this form “an efficient orchestra” was placed. It consisted of a boy to play the panpipes and the triangles at one and the same moment, a lad to thump away at the bass drum, and a blind man to perform on the clarionet—the last being dignified in the bills by the title of “leader of the orchestra, and conductor of music.” The whole under the immediate superintendence of Mr. Ferdinand Gustavus Trash.

After an immensity of preliminary puffs into the clarionet, occasional rattles on the drum, and consultations among themselves as to the air to be played, the musicians struck up the spirit-stirring “All Round my Hat;” which, though achieved in beautiful disregard of time and concord, was received with great—ay, with very great applause, by the momentarily increasing audience, some of whom mistook it

for "God Save the King," and, in an extreme fit of loyalty, bawled out—"Off hats! stand up!" with which command many did not hesitate to comply.

There was a pause, interrupted at length by the loudly expressed wish of the gods that the curtain should draw up. Up it went accordingly, and "Venice Preserved" commenced with some show of enthusiasm. Belvidera was personated by an interesting female of five-and-thirty, who, after parting in tears from Jaffier, a youth of eighteen, as the means of acquainting the audience with her extraordinary vocal abilities, consoled herself and them with that very appropriate ditty—"Within a Mile of Edinburgh Town," accompanied by the orchestra. The Doge of Venice, not to be outdone, as it were, left his throne after the terrific disclosures of Jaffier, and, in honest exultation at the discovery of the horrid plot, solaced the mysterious Council of Ten with—"I was the boy for bewitching them." The bass drum was particularly distinguished in the accompaniment.

In a critique of the performances which Mr. Micklewhame wrote, he says—"It would have greatly added to the delight of those conversant with the pure English idiom, had many of the actors paid a visit, for a short time, to the first floor of the Assembly Room, ere venturing to appear on the second."

The meagreness of the company compelled several of the principal performers to play inferior parts, in addition to those against which their names appeared in the bill. For instance, in "Rob Roy," the same person who performed Rashleigh had to "go on" in the capacity of a peasant, and sing a bass solo in the opening glee. Owen and Major Galbraith were *done* by the same individual. Mattie sung in the opening glee, and danced the Highland Fling at the Pass of Lochard, with Dougal and Bailie Nicol Jarvie. Some of the audience were scandalized at the appearance

of Mattie on this occasion, and began to entertain great doubts of the morality of the bailie, when they saw his handmaid in his company so far from the Trongate.

Seated on *the* front form, with green cloth back studded with brass nails, and immediately behind a row of six penny dipped candles, tastefully arranged in order among an equivalent number of holes in a stick placed in front of the drop-scene to divide the audience from the actors, Andrew Micklewhame gazed on all this with the stoical indifference of one who is used to such things: in short, he gazed on it with the eye of an experienced critic—the best of all possible ways to mar one's enjoyment of a play. Occasionally, however, he felt inclined to indulge in a hearty laugh; but the dignity of the critic came to his aid, and he restrained it by turning away his face from the stage and casting his scrutinizing glance around the inhabitants of the seats in the rear, or listened to the remarks of those in the pit. It was during the latter part of the performance of the first act, and the interval between it and the second, that he, in this manner, overheard the fragments of a conversation carried on, *sotto voce*, in the seat immediately behind him. He had the curiosity to steal a glance at the speakers. They were a young woman, with fine dark eyes, and a young man, of apparently five-and-twenty years of age, with cheeks redolent of rouge, enveloped in a faded Petersham greatcoat, whom Andrew immediately set down as belonging to the company of comedians. He could hear the young woman with the dark eyes upbraiding the young man with the coloured cheeks for deserting her; then the young man said he had intended to write her soon, with some money, so she ought not to have followed him.

"I am pretty well situated in lodgings here at present," continued the young man; "but I cannot venture to take you there to-night, for the fact of my being a married

man would not, were it known, raise me in the estimation of the landlady. But I will procure other lodgings for you after the play is over; and if you do not hear from me in the morning, at farthest by ten, you may call for me at the inn where I am staying." He ended by observing that he was wanted in the next act to go on as a Highlander; and, accordingly, he left her, and crept in behind the curtain.

There was nothing very extraordinary in all this; yet, though Andrew knew that such occurrences happened daily, he could not help thinking of what he had just overheard, and feeling interested in the damsel of the sparkling eyes. He did not dare, however, to take another peep at her, as he thought it would be too marked; and when he rose, at the termination of the performances, to go away, the seat behind him was quite vacant; nor could he discern, among the dense mass of human beings that obstructed the door-way, the slightest vestige of her, or the youth in the shabby greatcoat who had acknowledged himself her husband.

The rain had not ceased when Mr. Micklewhame left the Assembly Room, so he hurried to his inn with all possible despatch. Mr. Micklewhame prided himself on his knowledge of the principles of economy; and when he travelled he invariably made it a point to take no more than two meals per diem—breakfast and tea—both with a meat accompaniment; but this evening—this particular evening—as he sat toasting his toes before an excellent fire, in a comfortable parlour of a comfortable inn, and heard the rain pattering against the casement, it, somehow or other, entered into his head that a tumbler of punch would be by no means amiss. A tumbler of punch was ordered in accordingly; after that came a second; and a third; and—no, we can't exactly say that there was a fourth. At all events, there was a marked inclination, first towards one

side of the staircase, and then towards the other, in Mr. Andrew Micklewhame's ascent to his bedroom that evening. Nay, more ; he attempted to kiss Kirsty as she was depositing the candlestick upon the table ; but he missed his aim, and measured his length on the floor. By the time he was up again, Kirsty had vanished.

Mr. Micklewhame was a little annoyed that he could not use the precaution of bolting his door. The mysterious man, with the black whiskers and broad shoulders, had not yet claimed his bed, although it was pretty well on towards

"The wee short hour ayont the twal."

"I don't half like this sleeping in a double-bedded room, with a man I never saw," he thought, but did not venture to say it aloud, lest some one might be within ear-shot, and set him down as a coward. "I wonder," exclaimed he, as he proceeded to undress before the yet glowing embers of a consumptive fire, "whether—hic—whether the f—f—fellow snores. I sha'n't sleep, I'm sure—hic—I sha'n't—hic—sleep, if the f—f—fellow snores."

Having delivered himself of this very sensible observation, he got into one of the beds in the best way he could, covered himself up warm, and fell fast asleep.

Dreams visited his pillow ; distorted visions, in which Kirsty, the dark-eyed damoiselle, and the man with the black whiskers, bore prominent parts, flitted across his fancy. Then he felt himself borne through the air by a vulture in a shabby brown greatcoat, which set him down on the top of a high house, and flew away. He thought he got up and groped his way along the house-top ; but, missing his footing, he fell over, and would certainly have had his brains dashed out upon the pavement below, had not the motion of his descent caused him to start and awaken. All was still within the chamber. He looked out

of bed, but could discover no signs of the appearance of his mysterious neighbour ; so he composed himself to sleep again. This time, however, he was not so successful as at first ; for it was only after some time that he could coax himself into a sort of doze—something betwixt sleeping and waking. While in this state, he fancied he saw the man in the brown greatcoat enter the room ; then he saw a flash of light ; then he imagined he smelt sulphur ; and then, all of a sudden, he felt himself in reality pulled half out of bed.

“Hollo, hollo !” cried he ; “what the deuce is the matter ?” and he rubbed his eyes until he found himself wide awake.

“Sir, sir !” cried a voice, “you’ve made a mistake—you’ve got into my bed in place of your own.”

Any one in Andrew’s place but Andrew himself would have cursed and sworn like a trooper at a person daring to awaken him from a comfortable snooze upon such slight pretences ; but Andrew was a peaceable man—he never liked to make any disturbance—and he actually, without saying a word, turned out of the bed he had warmed for himself, and allowed the stranger to get into his place. He was sure, at all events, that he had not given up his bed to any but the lawful tenant of the room ; for a blink of fire-light gleamed upon a pair of extensive whiskers, with shoulders to correspond. The features struck Andrew as being familiar to him ; but he could not, though he tried, for the life of him, recollect where he had before seen them. He cursed the fellow’s impudence, as he discovered that the smell of sulphur which had saluted his olfactory nerves, was *not* the smell of sulphur, but of a candle having been blown out. He did not dare, though, to utter a word on the subject. He felt very much afraid—indeed, so much so, that it was not till after an hour’s perambulation through the room, that he could prevail

on himself to lie down in the empty bed. Again he fell fast asleep.

When he awoke, the morning light was streaming into the room through the chinks of the shutters. He wondered very much what o'clock it was, as he remembered that he purposed setting off by the omnibus at nine, and groped about for his watch. Horror!—he had left it beneath the pillow of the other bed.

Jumping to the floor with considerable agility, and opening the shutters with a bang, in the hope that noise and daylight would bring him courage, the first objects that met his astonished gaze, were a shabby brown greatcoat and a shocking bad hat, lying carelessly on a chair. Had any one asked Andrew to shave his head without soap, or give sixpence for a penny loaf, he could not have been more amazed or terror-stricken than he was at that moment. That the shabby brown greatcoat and the shocking bad hat belonged to the mysterious man with the black whiskers, and that the mysterious man with the black whiskers, and he who had sat beside the damsel with the bright eyes at the play, were one and the same individual, Mr. Andrew Micklewhame had not the smallest doubt, and thereupon he began to get a little fidgetty regarding his watch. The curtains of the bed were closely drawn—so closely that Andrew could not see in; and he did not just like at first to open the curtains and disturb the whiskered youth in the same manner as the whiskered youth had disturbed him. No. Andrew was a more generous-minded man than that.

He paced the room for some time, fancying all sorts of things about the owner of the shabby brown greatcoat, but never taking his eye off the curtains, resolved to rush forward on the first appearance of their opening.

“ ‘Tis for no good this fellow lives here,” thought Andrew. “ All a sham, too, his being connected with

these players. I have no doubt in my own mind that he is either the murderer of Begbie in disguise, or a resurrectionist. Ah! perhaps he has run away from the world, and come here for the purpose of committing suicide in a quiet way. But, no; why should he? That's quite improbable." And, after thinking all this, he paused for about five minutes, then exclaimed, not aloud, however—"I can bear this suspense no longer. Ecod! I'll ask the fellow who he is, and, at the same time, claim my watch!"

So saying, he rushed forward with a determined air, drew the curtains, and discovered—the bed was empty!

"He can't have gone far, for he has left his coat and hat behind him," were Andrew's reflections; and as he said this, he looked for his watch, and then for his clothes. Amazement! they were all gone; watch, shirt, coat, vest, and inexpressibles—all had vanished. In a paroxysm of fury he rang the bell; and, presently, the voice of Kirsty, from without, inquired, as she half-opened the door, and thrust forward a pair of well worn Wellingtons, which Andrew recognised as not belonging to him—"D'ye please to want onything else?"

"Anything else!" roared Andrew, choking with rage, and utterly regardless of the respect due to the sex of the speaker. "Come in here, and help me to find my trowsers!"

"O you—ye'll wait awhile, I'm thinkin, or I do sicc an a thing."

"Zounds! that infernal fellow must have carried them off!" muttered Andrew.

"Na, na," said Kirsty; "it's no the infernal gentleman ava, man. I wadna be the least surprised but it's that auld punchy buddy that sleepit in this room last nicht, and ran awa this morning, wi' the nine o'clock omnibush, without payin his reckonin, that's ta'en yer breeks; but ye needna mind, ye can just pit on *his* for a day."

This was too much. To be told that he himself was the thief of his own o-no-we-never-mention-ems, and that he had run away that morning without paying his reckoning, was more than Andrew Micklewhame could bear.

"Are you mad, woman?" cried he. "Confound you, I'll leave your house instantly, and bring an action for the recovery of my clothes."

"Your claes, quotha—your claes. My man, thae tricks winna do here, I can tell ye. Ye're fund oot at last. My certie, to hear a fallow speakin o' claes, whan it's weel kenned he had nac mair than a brown greatcoat, an auld hat, an' a pair o' boots I wadna gie tippence for. Ye're fund oot at last. There's twa chaps below has twa or three words to say to ye."

"They may go to the devil, and you along with them!" was Andrew's pert rejoinder.

"Bide a bit—just bide a bit. Hy," cried Kirsty, seemingly over the banisters of the stair, to some unknown individual or individuals below. "Stap up this way, will ye?"

And fast upon the heels of this summons, in walked two justice of peace officers, who, despite the asseverations of Mr. Andrew Micklewhame that he was himself and no other, ordered him to don the brown greatcoat, and the shocking bad hat, and follow them.

"We've pursued you from Queensferry," said the first—"round by Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Stirling; and Grog the innkeeper is determined to punish you, unless you pay him for the eight weeks' board you had in his house, and our expenses over and above."

It was in vain that Mr. Micklewhame protested he had never been in Queensferry in his life; nor had he the honour of the acquaintance of Grog, the innkeeper; but, at length, seeing that it was impossible to convince the officers to the contrary, he thought it advisable to pay the

amount of their demand, and trust to law and justice afterwards for retribution. Even with this he found himself unable to comply—his purse, containing every rap he owned in the world, was in the pockets of his inexpressibles.

There was no help for it. With despair in his countenance, he donned the shabby brown greatcoat and the dilapidated Wellingtons, took the shocking bad hat in his hand, and, in silence, followed the officers of justice down stairs, determining to appeal to the generosity of the landlady, who, he had no doubt, would give full credence to his story.

The present mishap of Mr. Micklewhame had arisen solely from the fact of his having taken so much toddy overnight, which was the cause of his sleeping longer and more soundly in the morning than usual. Kirsty, ever vigilant, had gone to the door of the double-bedded room and knocked, at the same time calling out, with a stentorian voice, that “the omnibus was ready to start.” All this was unheeded by Andrew, who slept on, utterly unconscious of the progress of time. Not so, however, was it with the other occupant of the chamber; for no sooner did he hear Kirsty’s summons, than a lucky thought occurred to him; and he bawled through the door, in tones “not loud but deep,” that he would be down instantly. He then proceeded, in the coolest manner possible, to adorn himself in the habiliments of his somniferous neighbour; which, he soon perceived, were a “world too wide” for him—a fault which he instantly remedied by the assistance of a pillow, disposed of after the manner he had seen greater actors than himself “make themselves up” for the character of Falstaff. Thus equipped, he removed Andrew’s watch from beneath the pillow, and placed it in the same pocket it had occupied the preceding day; took off his portable bushy whiskers, and put them in his pocket; then bidding adieu to his brown greatcoat and nap-

less hat, which, with the accompaniment of a pair of well-worn Wellington boots, had been his only attire for many a day, he strode from the apartment, carefully shutting the door behind him. As he got to the foot of the stairs, there was Kirsty in the outer passage. For a moment he felt undetermined what course next to pursue; but his never-failing wit came to his aid, and, stepping into a side room, the window of which looked out into the street, he desired Kirsty to bring him his bill of fare—*i. e.*, the bill of fare peculiar to Mr. Andrew Micklewhame—and a sheet of writing-paper, with pens and ink. Those being brought, and Kirsty having shut the door, leaving him “all alone in his glory,” he scribbled a few lines on the paper, and made it up in the form of a letter. This was no sooner done, than the “impatient bugle”—*vulgo vocato*, tin horn—of the ominous cad, who stood on the opposite side of the street, just behind the omnibus, holding open the door with his left hand, blew a blast so loud and shrill, that all those in waiting in the street, who had serious intentions of proceeding to Stirling by that conveyance, seemed, of one accord, to know that it was their last warning; so, shaking hands with the friends who had come “to see them off,” they scrambled nimbly up the steps of the omnibus, and passed from before the view of the bystanders into its ponderous interior. Our actor saw this, and, without more ado, he opened the window and jumped into the street. His letter he deposited in the post-office receiving-box, and his body in the omnibus, which, being now full, the cad banged to the door, gave the signal to the driver, and off the omnibus rattled; nor did Kirsty or her mistress know of the escapement of their guest, whom they both believed to be Andrew Micklewhame, until he was a considerable part on his way to Stirling.

* * * * *

Kirsty was in the bar, stamping the post-mark on some

letters—for her mistress was postmaster—and talking to a young woman with bright eyes.

“The villain that he is!” said Kirsty. “A married man! Wha wad hae thocht it? an’ a playactor too, crinkypatie! He’ll be doon the noo, and ye’ll see him then. There’s twa gentlemen gaen up to him a wee while ago.”

At this moment the landlady opened the door of a parlour off the bar, and handed to Kirsty some letters, which she had been ostensibly arranging for delivery—in reality, making herself acquainted with their contents.

“Here’s six for delivery, and one to lie till called for!” Kirsty took them; and as her mistress shut the door, read aloud from the back of the letter—“‘To lie till called for.’ The name, ‘Mrs. Isabella Young!’”

“What!” exclaimed the dark-eyed young woman starting, “a letter for me?” and she almost snatched it out of Kirsty’s hand. A gleam of joy played upon her handsome face as she read—

“DEAR ISY,—I enclose you a crown; if you want more, apply to Manager Trash for my arrears of salary. I’m off to Perth with the toggery of an old fellow who slept in the same room with me last night. They’ll perhaps talk of pursuing me; if so, detain them as long as possible, and follow, at your leisure,

“Your affectionate

“PATRICK YOUNG.”

At this juncture appeared Andrew in the custody of the two officers; and the damsel of the dark eyes, taking her cue from the document she had just perused, rushed forward and threw herself into his arms, exclaiming, “My own, my lost one!—Oh, do not—do not drag my husband from me!” The latter part of her sentence was addressed to the officers of justice.

"Loshifycairyme!" cried Kirsty; "he's lost his bonny black whiskers, and turned fatter nor he was!" Then, after a moment's reflection, she added—"But thae player buddies can do onything!"

"My pretty one," said Andrew, "I know nothing of you!" Yet the young woman still clung to her embrace. "You vile woman," he continued, waxing wroth, "get you gone. I'll tell your husband if you don't!" But Mrs. Young clung close and closer to him. He then addressed himself to Kirsty, desiring her to inform her mistress that he wished to say a few words to her. "Tell her," he continued, "that I am in great tribulation here, and I wish her to advance a small sum of money to these gentlemen, which will be returned with grateful thanks as soon as I get to Edinburgh."

Kirsty grumbled a little at being sent on such an errand; but proceeded into the little parlour off the bar. In a few seconds she returned, saying—"My mistress 'll no advance money to ony man unless to her lawfu' husband; and she says gif ye like to marry her, she'll do't, but no unless. I'm sure I dinna ken what she means, seeing ye're a married man already!"

"What!" exclaimed Andrew, "marry a woman I never saw?"

"On nae ither condition will she advance the money. Between oorsels, my mistress is worth at least twa thousand."

"Two thousand pounds!" thought Andrew. "The speculation wouldn't be such a bad one after all." And, after a show of hesitation, he gave a reluctant consent, as the only way, and a speedy one, to relieve him from his difficulties. His private debts amounted to at least a hundred pounds; and with two thousand pounds he could pay that; ay, and live like a prince besides.

The whole party was ushered into the little back parlour,

where, to complete Andrew's amazement, he descried, seated over a cup of coffee, the identical Widow Brown to whom he had given the slip six years before. She rose and shook him by the hand.

"Be not amazed!" she said. "The moment I saw you, from the window of this room, enter my inn yesterday, I recognised you, and my love for you returned. I know all." She certainly did, for she had read Patrick Young's letter to his wife. "I shall procure your immediate release; and should you rue the consent you have just given, you are free to return to Edinburgh as you came—a single man!"

"Generous woman!" cried Andrew, sinking on one knee, "this—this is too much! Think ye I could again desert you? No, by heaven!"—Here he laid his hand upon his breast, and turned up the white of his eyes in an attempt to look pathetic. The widow raised him and led him to a seat. The officers were dismissed; and the damsel with the dark eyes escaped through the open door as they went out, fearful of being detained for her deceitful attempt upon the person of Andrew Micklewhame.

In a few days the nuptials were solemnized; and Andrew Micklewhame ever blessed the lucky chance that led him to Alloa.

History is silent regarding the ultimate fate of Mr. Patrick Young; but it is to be hoped that he was either hanged or sent to Botany Bay. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Micklewhame thought it worth their while to pursue him for the injuries he had done them; and Grog, the innkeeper, could not, for his myrmidons had lost the scent of the stroller from the moment he fled from Alloa.

THE HIGHLAND BOY.

STRANGE, sometimes, are the destinies of men, and mysterious the ways of Providence. In these expressions there is nothing new, for they have been repeated a thousand times before ; but we are not sure that they have often been more strikingly illustrated than in the following short narrative—alas ! “owre true a tale.” Within a short distance of the town of Inverary, in Argyleshire, there lived, towards the middle of last century, a person of the name of M’Lauchlane. He was a miller to business ; but, if any idea be formed of his circumstances as such, or of the general condition and appearance of his establishment, from those of the “jolly millers” of the low country, with their large, well-built, slated mills, filled with expensive machinery—their comfortable houses, and rough and round abundance—it will be a very erroneous one. The highland miller—he, at any rate, of the last century—was a very different person, and very differently circumstanced. His business was trifling, as it must, of necessity, have been, in a country yielding but little corn—just sufficient, and barely so, to support, with other aids, its thin and widely scattered population. His mill was a small, thatched, crazy building ; and its machinery (almost all of wood), the clumsy, rude workmanship of the miller himself. Such, at any rate, was M’Lauchlane’s establishment—a very poor affair ; and very poor, though very industrious, and an honest and upright man, was M’Lauchlane himself. Yet, strange as it may seem in a person in his situation in life, he was not only an upright man, but a man of some education, of a grave and intelligent cast of countenance, and of a tall and athletic form.

For fifteen years, M'Lauchlane toiled on his little farm with unwearied assiduity, struggling with a barren soil, that scarcely yielded a subsistence for his family, leaving no surplus for sale, the rent being paid by a few black cattle reared for the purpose; and more than half of that time dividing this labour with attendance on his little mill; and other fifteen years, had he lived so long, would, in all probability, have found him still thus employed, had not a circumstance occurred which suddenly changed his destiny. He quarrelled with his landlord, and resolved suddenly, in a fit of exasperation, upon leaving his mill. He never gave any further particulars of the occurrence which had galled his proud spirit. He never said what was the cause of quarrel between him and his laird; but the fancied disgrace of some harsh word which the latter had used towards him, preyed on his mind, and, in less than a fortnight after, he resigned his mill and his farm, and proceeded to the low country—in search of employment. This he found in Edinburgh, where he had some friends, in the humble capacity of a caddie, or chairman.

On leaving the place of his residence in the Highlands, M'Lauchlane left behind him, until he should fall into some way of earning a subsistence, his wife, a son, and two daughters. The son was, at this period, about fifteen years of age; a fine, manly-looking boy, of kind and amiable dispositions, the pride of his mother's heart, and the stay of his father's hopes. It was not doubted that, on the latter obtaining employment, he would succeed in procuring some situation or other in Edinburgh for his son also; and, with these, and sundry other little plans and prospects, the family of M'Lauchlane, including himself, looked forward to the enjoyment of some happy days. Having obtained employment himself, M'Lauchlane lost no time in looking out for an engagement for his son; and, at length, found an opening for him in a merchant's count-

ing-house in Leith. This good fortune he speedily communicated to his family, desiring that James should immediately set out for Edinburgh. James, however, had been already unexpectedly provided for, although not altogether to his liking. He had been engaged to assist some salmon-curers who had an establishment in the neighbourhood ; and with these he was now employed. The wages, however, were small, and the work heavy ; but it was considered by the dutiful boy himself a desirable situation, as it enabled him to reside with his mother, whom he tenderly loved, and to contribute more promptly and efficiently to her support than if he were at a distance. On these accounts, therefore, he determined to remain in his present employment for some time at least—this was till the ensuing term, when it was proposed that the whole family should proceed to Edinburgh, to join their head ; and this was stated in reply to James' father, who, though he longed to have his boy with him, acquiesced in its propriety ; and thus matters stood for several weeks, when it was found that James' strength was unequal to the labour imposed on him. The poor lad was long unwilling to admit this, even to himself, and continued to toil on with uncomplaining perseverance ; but a mother's anxiety and scrutinizing solicitude soon discovered what he would have concealed. She saw, from his wan cheek and sunken eye, that he was tasked beyond his strength, and that a continuance much longer in his present employment might even endanger his life. Impressed with this idea, she insisted on him quitting it, and proceeding immediately to Edinburgh to join his father.

"But, mother," said the affectionate boy, "what will you do without me ? My wages, though small, are a great help to you."

"They are, James, no doubt," replied his mother ; "but what are your wages, or what would all the gold

and silver in the world be to me, compared to your life, my child? Think ye that anything could compensate that to your mother, James? No, no; all the wealth of the Indies, my son, would be nothing to me, if anything was to happen you. Besides, you can help me even where you are going. You can remit me a little of your wages, along with what your father sends from his; and, at the term, you know, which is now only four months distant, we will all be together again, and as happy as the day's long."

Thus reasoned with, and feeling his own physical inadequacy to continue in his present employment, the boy finally consented to leave it, and to proceed to Edinburgh, to join his father. It was not thought necessary to give the latter any previous intimation of this change in his son's views; and no communication, therefore, took place on the subject.

The day fixed for the boy's departure having arrived, a little bundle, containing some small articles of wearing apparel, and some bread and cheese, was made up for him by the hands of his doting mother, whose tears fell fast and thick on the little humble package, as she tied it up. This completed, the boy took down a staff from amongst many that were hung to the roof of the cottage, thrust one end of it through the bundle, shouldered it manfully, clapped his bonnet on his head, and was about suddenly to rush out of the house, finding that he could not stand a more deliberate parting; when his mother, flying after him, caught him by the arm just as he had reached the door, and, murmuring his name, clasped him in her arms, and, in silent anguish, pressed him convulsively to her bosom. The weeping boy returned the fond embrace of his mother; but, at length, tore himself away, and hurried off, with a speed that soon carried him out of her sight.

The lad had now a long journey before him, not less than a hundred and fifty miles, the whole of which was to be performed on foot, for there were then no conveyances on his intended route; and, although there had, he had no money to pay for their use; but, as he was active and vigorous, and accustomed to rove over his native hills like a young deer, a journey on foot of even a hundred and fifty miles had nothing formidable whatever in it for him; and it was, therefore, with a fearless heart and bounding step that he now took the long, wild, and dreary highland road, that was to conduct him to the city in which his father resided.

In about four months after the boy had left home to join his father in Edinburgh, his mother, with her two daughters, also proceeded to that city, and for the same purpose; the period having arrived which, according to previous understanding, was to see the family once more united under one roof. We will not attempt to describe the poor mother's feelings of joyous anticipation on this occasion, as she looked forward to the exquisite happiness of embracing the two objects whom she loved best on earth, her husband and son. These feelings were such as the reader can imagine for himself without our aid or interference.

On M'Lauchlane's wife and daughters arriving, which they did in due time and in safety, at the humble domicile which the farmer's dutiful affection had provided for them in Edinburgh, the first question she asked of her husband, and she put it ere she had yet fairly entered his door, was—

“Where is James? Where is my dear boy, Fergus?”

“Why, Margaret,” replied M'Lauchlane, laughingly, “you should know that fully better than I do. Where did you leave him?” The boy had never reached his father's house.

"Come, come, now, Fergus, none of your tricks," said his wife, smiling. "Tell me where my boy is—I cannot rest till I see him."

"Ha, ha!" rejoined her husband, now laughing outright, "you keep up the farce very well, Margaret; but, come, now, let James be produced; for *I* am impatient to see him. You want to tantalize me a little."

"Or rather it is you that wish to tantalize me, Fergus," replied his wife, good-humouredly; "but do not keep me longer in pain, I beseech you. Go and bring James to me immediately. Do now, I entreat of you."

"Margaret," said M'Lauchlane, now somewhat alarmed—
—for the earnest manner of his wife struck him as very
strange, and as carrying very little of jocularity in it—
"Margaret," he said, gravely, "is this jest or earnest? Is
James not with you?—and, if he is not, where is he?"

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed his wife, in an agony of horror—she in turn having marked the serious manner of her husband—"what is this come over us? O Fergus, Fergus," she said, in dreadful agitation, and flinging her arms around her husband in wild despair, "has not James been with you for these three months past? He left home to come to you then, and I always believed him to be with you. O my God, my God! where is my child? What has come over my boy?" And she gave way to a fearful and uncontrollable paroxysm of grief.

During this scene, her husband sat silent and motionless; but there were dreadful workings going on in his bosom. His face was deadly pale, and his lips quivered with agonizing emotion.

"I have never seen him, Margaret," he at length said, in a slow and solemn tone—"never seen him. What has come over my boy?" And the strong man burst into tears.

We need not prolong our description of the scene of

misery which ensued on the appalling discovery being made, as it now was, that the poor boy had never reached his destination. His distracted father instantly set about the apparently hopeless task of ascertaining what had been his fate ; but, for some weeks after, all remained as great a mystery as ever ; and no exertion or inquiries he could make, led to the slightest elucidation of the fact. At length, however, a clue to the mystery was obtained. It was gradually unwarped, and a train of circumstances finally unfolded the dreadful tale. In disclosing this tale to the reader, however, we have no occasion whatever to go through the tedious and digressive process by which M'Lauchlane ultimately arrived at the history of his unfortunate son's fate. Ours is a much simpler and much easier task. It is merely to place the facts in their order, divested of all extraneous matter ; and this will be best done by our retrogressing a little, and resuming the history of the unhappy boy's proceedings after leaving his mother, at the point where we left it.

On the evening of the second day after his departure, the lad arrived at Stirling, and had thus accomplished about half his journey. On reaching this town, where he intended remaining for the night, young M'Lauchlane repaired to a certain public-house, which he knew, by report, to be much frequented by his countrymen, when going to and from the Highlands and the low country. This house was usually crowded with guests ; but it happened that it contained but one on the night of his arrival. The solitary stranger was an Irishman, on his way to Edinburgh, as he said, to look for employment. Between young M'Lauchlane and this person—they being the only two guests in the house—a familiar footing was soon established, chiefly through the advances of the latter, who affected a sudden and strong liking for his young companion, whom he insisted on treating with some liquor. In the morning, they

breakfasted together, and, immediately after, set out together for Edinburgh—M'Lauchlane delighted with the kindness and rattling off-hand glee of his companion, who seemed, to his unsuspicous and unsophisticated nature, one of the best and merriest fellows he had ever met with. In place, however, of showing an anxiety to prosecute the journey with the expedition natural to those seeking a distant destination, M'Lauchlane's companion seemed bent on living by the way. Every mile, and often within shorter distances, he insisted on his young friend's taking some refreshment with him. He would, in truth, scarcely pass a single public-house on the road; but he paid, in every instance, for the entertainment to which he invited his companion. Two consequences resulted from this manner of proceeding. These were—young M'Lauchlane's getting, for the first time in his life, somewhat intoxicated; and the expiry of the day, before they had completed their journey that comprehended the distance between Stirling and Edinburgh. The shades of evening were thus just beginning to gather, as the travellers reached a small village about six or seven miles from Edinburgh; and it had become pretty dark by the time they had got midway between the two places just named. At this particular locality, young M'Lauchlane and his companion passed a well-dressed, respectable-looking, elderly man, on the road, who was going in the same direction with themselves. On having gone beyond him, about the distance of a hundred yards or so, the Irishman suddenly stopped, and addressing his young friend, said—

“ I owe that old rascal that we passed just now, a grudge, and have a good mind to go back and give him a taste of this twig, by way of recompense”—shaking a stout cudgel that he carried in his hand. “ Will you lend me a hand?”

Stupefied, or rather, perhaps, distracted with the drink

which he had swallowed, the poor, unreflecting boy at once agreed to assist his friend in revenging the injuries of which he complained. What these were, or when, where, or how they had taken place, he never thought of inquiring. It was enough for him that his companion had been injured, and enough also for him was the assertion of the latter that he had been so, and that the old man they had just passed was the inflictor of this injury.

In a minute after, the old man, whom they had now approached, was knocked down by the bludgeon of the Irishman—young M'Lauchlane standing close by. On his falling—

“Tip his watch there,” said the former, in a hurried whisper to his companion, at the same time nudging him with his elbow; “and feel if the old fellow has any clink in his pockets. Out with it if he has. He owes me ten times more than he has about him, let that be what it may.”

Without a moment’s thought or hesitation, the unthinking boy, doing as he was desired, flung himself on the prostrate old man, seized his watch chain, and had just dragged it from its pocket, when he was seized by the collar from behind. On turning round, he found himself in the custody of two men, who had come up accidentally, unheard and unobserved, at least by him; but not by his companion, who, aware of their approach, had, without giving the unfortunate lad warning, darted through a hedge, and disappeared. It was in vain that the unhappy youth, on perceiving the dreadful predicament in which he stood, urged the extenuating facts of the case to his captors. All the circumstances of a highway robbery, aggravated by personal violence, were too apparent, and too clearly referable to M'Lauchlane as the perpetrator, to allow of anything he might assert to the contrary being for an instant believed.

On the recovery of the old man (whose face was streaming with blood) from the temporary stupefaction which the blow he had been struck had caused, M'Lauchlane was conveyed a prisoner to Edinburgh, handed over to the police, and eventually thrown into jail on a capital charge.

We may here pause a moment to remark that, at the period of our tale, the penal code of this country was enforced, with the most unrelenting ferocity, against all offenders who came within the reach of its sanguinary enactments. Mercy was then unknown in the dispensation of the criminal laws, which, written in blood, were executed to the letter, without regard to any of those considerations which are now permitted to have their influence on the side of clemency. The ultimate fate of the poor Highland boy may be anticipated; and this the more certainly, that his seducer was never taken, or even heard of; so that no chance was left him of the facts of his unhappy case being ascertained.

Shortly after being committed to prison, he was capitally indicted to stand trial before the court, which happened to be held in Edinburgh about six weeks after his apprehension; and, on the evidence of the old man and the two persons who had assisted in his capture, he was convicted of highway robbery, condemned to death, and actually executed at the usual place of execution; neither the boy's extreme youth, nor the extenuating circumstances connected with his case (which, indeed, the Court was not bound to believe, seeing there was only his own bare unsupported assertion of the facts), having the slightest effect on his judges, who, partaking at once of the spirit of the times and of the laws, were sternly rigorous in the execution of what they conceived to be their duty—seeing no safety for society but in a frequent and unsparing use of the gibbet.

We have now to explain the most extraordinary part of

this piteous case—and that is, how it was that the poor boy's parents knew nothing of his miserable fate till it was discovered by the inquiry of which we shall shortly speak. In the first place, his father took it for granted that he was at home with his mother, and his mother believed that he was with his father, and thus his absence was known to neither; and, therefore, no unusual interest regarding him was excited. During his confinement, and at all his recognitions, the infatuated boy steadily refused—though for what reason we know not—to give up his name, or to give any account of himself whatever. He would neither tell where he came from, where or to whom he was going, nor what nor who were his parents; and in this resolution he remained to the last; and, as no one knew him, he was thus finally executed, without any single particular being known regarding him, excepting that for which he suffered. Neither could he be prevailed upon to make known his situation to any of his friends. In short, he seemed to have determined to prevent his fate from ever being associated with his identity.

What his motives were for this extraordinary conduct—whether it arose from a fear of disgracing his family, or from tenderness to the feelings of his parents—we cannot tell, nor will we trouble the reader with conjectures which he can make as well for himself. We content ourselves with relating the facts of the melancholy case, as they actually and truly occurred.

It was by an inquiry at the police-office of Edinburgh, whither he had gone, as a last expedient, to endeavour to find some trace of his son, that M'Lauchlane obtained the intelligence that led to the discovery of his unhappy fate. He had gone to the office, however, without the most remote idea that he should there learn anything of his boy as a violator of the laws, but merely as a repository of general intelligence on such subjects as that in which he

was at the moment interested. Having stated his errand to two officers whom he found there, they asked him to describe the boy. This he did; when the men looked significantly at each other. Poor M'Lauchlane observed the look; and he felt his heart failing him, as he imagined, and too truly, that he saw in it something ominous.

"Do you know anything of my boy?" he said, looking piteously at the officers.

They made no reply, but seemed a good deal discomposed. They felt for the unfortunate father—having little or no doubt, from the personal description, and other particulars he gave of the boy, that it was he who had been executed for the robbery on the Stirling road.

"Tell me, for God's sake, if you know anything of my son," said the poor father, imploringly, after waiting some time in vain for an answer to his first inquiry of a similar kind.

The men would have still evaded a reply, and were, indeed, both edging out of the apartment, to avoid being further pressed on the subject, when M'Lauchlane seized one of them by the arm, and besought him not to leave him, without giving him what information he possessed on the subject of his inquiry. "Has any accident happened him?" said the miserable father. "Is he dead? Tell me, for Heaven's sake, tell me the worst at once. I can bear it. If he is dead, I say, God's will be done. Is it so or not, my friend?" again said M'Lauchlane, with a look of wretchedness that the man could not resist.

"I am afraid he is," was the reply.

"Still, I say God's will be done," said M'Lauchlane, endeavouring to display a composure he was far, very far from feeling. He next inquired into the time and manner of his death. On being informed, the unhappy man instantly sank down on the floor in a state of insensibility. He had little dreamt of such a horrible catastrophe; and,

however resigned he might have been to his boy's having met with a natural death, his fortitude was unequal to the dreadful trial it was now called on to sustain. On coming again to himself, the unfortunate man left the office without exchanging a word with any one, and returned to his own house. When he entered, his wife, as was her usual practice, eagerly inquired if he had yet heard any tidings of their son; but she soon saw that she had no occasion whatever to put the question. The haggard countenance of her husband—a countenance in which the utmost depth of human misery was strongly depicted—assured her at once that tidings had been heard of the boy, and that these were of the most dismal kind.

"He's dead, then," she screamed out, on looking on the wo-begone, or rather horror-stricken face of her husband—"my boy is gone." And she flung herself on the floor in a paroxysm of grief and despair.

To his wife's exclamations, M'Lauchlane made no reply, but threw himself on a bed, and buried his head beneath the clothes. But this covering did not conceal the dreadful writhings of the crushed spirit beneath. The bed-clothes heaved with the violent emotions that shook the powerful frame of the miserable sufferer. From that bed M'Lauchlane never again rose. He never, however, told his wife of the unhappy death her son had died; steadily and even sternly resisting all the importunities on that appalling subject; and whether she ever learned it, we are not aware.

MAJOR WEIR'S COACH.

A LEGEND OF EDINBURGH.*

THE time of our story was September, early in the seventies of the last century, or it might be the end of the sixties—it matters not much as to the year—but it was in the month of September, when parties and politics had set the freemen and burgesses of the royal burghs by the ears—when feasting and caballing formed almost their whole employment. The exaltation of themselves or party friends to the civic honours engrossed their whole attention, and neither money nor time was grudgingly bestowed to obtain their objects. The embellishment and improvement of the city of Edinburgh were keenly urged and carried on by one party, at the head of which was Provost Drummond. He was keenly opposed by another, which, though fewer in number, and not so well organized, was not to be despised; for it only wanted a leader of nerve and tact to stop or utterly undo all that had been done, and keep the city, as it had been for more than a century, in a position of stately decay. The wild project of building a bridge over the North Loch was keenly contested; and ruin and

* A legend, similar to that here given, was current in Glasgow a number of years ago, and for ages before. The hero's name was Bob Dragon, whose income, when alive, was said to have been one guinea a minute. His coachman and horses were said, as those of the major, to want the heads. The most curious trait of the Glasgow goblin horses, was that they went down to the river to drink, although they had no heads. The superstitions of most European countries have a similar origin: the Germans have their spectre huntsman; the coaches and horses of Major Weir and Bob Dragon are of the same character. The antiquary will find the trial of Major Weir in Pitcairn's "Criminal Trials;" and the lover of such stories may consult "Satan's Invisible World Discovered."—ED.

bankruptcy were foretold to the good town, if the provost and his party were not put out of the council before it was begun to be carried into execution.

The heavens were illuminated by a glorious harvest moon, far in her southings ; the High Street was deep in shade, like a long dark avenue ; the dim oil lamps, perched high upon their wooden posts, few and far between, gleamed in the darkness like glow-worms—as two portly figures were seen in earnest discourse, walking, not with steady step, up the High Street.

"By my troth, deacon!" said one of them, "I fear Luckie Bell has had too much of our company this night. I had no idea it was so late. There is the eighth chime of St. Giles': what hour will strike?"

"Deil may care for me, 'Treasurer Kerr!' hiccuped the deacon.

"Preserve me, deacon!" replied the treasurer, "it has struck twelve! What shall I say to the wife? It's to-morrow, deacon! it's to-morrow!"

"Whisht, man, whisht! and no speak with such a melancholy voice," said the other. "Are you afraid of Kate? What have we to do with to-morrow? It is a day we shall never see, were we to live as long as Methusalem; for, auld as he was, he never saw 'to-morrow.' It's always to come, with its cares or joy." And the deacon stood and laughed aloud at his conceit. "Let to-morrow care for itself, Tom, say I. What can Kate say to you? What the deil need you care? Have we not had a happy evening? Have we not been well employed?" And they again moved on towards the Castlehill, where the deacon resided.

Thomas Kerr was treasurer of the incorporation, and hoped at this election to succeed his present companion, whose influence in the incorporation was great, and to secure which he was, for the time, his humble servant, and

though his own domicile was in St. Mary's Wynd, at the other extremity of the High Street, his ambition had overcome his fears of his better half, and, still ascending the long street, he resolved to accompany the deacon home; not, however, without some strong misgivings as to what he might encounter at his return. Both were in that happy state of excitement when cares and fears press lightly on the human mind; but the deacon, who had presided at the meeting, and spoken a good deal, was much more overcome than his treasurer; and the liquor had made him loquacious.

"Tom, man," again said the deacon, "you walk by my side as douce as if you were afraid to meet Major Weir in his coach on your way down the wynd to Kate. Be cheerful man, as I am. Tell her she will be deaconess in a fortnight, and that will quiet her clatter, or I know not what will please her; they are all fond of honours. We have done good work this night—secured two votes against Drummond; other three would graze him. Pluck up your spirit, Tom, and be active; if we fail, the whole town will be turned upside down—confound him, and his wild projects, of what he calls improvements! The deil be in me, if I can help thinking—and it sticks in my gizzard yet—that he was at the bottom of the pulling down of my outside stair, by these drunken fellows of masons; the more by token that, when, after much trouble, I discovered them, and had them all safe in the guardhouse, he took a small bail, and only fined them two shillings a-piece, when it caused me an expense of ten good pounds to repair the mischief they had done; and, more than that, I was forced to erect it inside the walls; for they would not allow me to put it as it was, or grant me a Dean of Guild warrant on any other terms. They said it cumbered the foot-pavement, although, as you know, it had stood for fifty years. From that day to this I have been his firm opponent in

and out of the council. Tom, are ye asleep? Where are your eyes? What high new wall is this? See, see, man!"

"This beats all he has done yet!" said the treasurer; "a high white wall across the High Street, and neither slap nor style that I can see! Wonderful, wonderful! A strange man that provost!"

"He has done it to vex me, since I came down to Luckie Bell's," replied the deacon. "It was not there in the early part of the evening. He must have had a hundred masons at it. But I'll make him repent this frolic to-morrow in the council, or my name is not Deacon Dickson!"

"What can he mean by it, deacon?" rejoined the other. "I see no purpose it can serve, for my part."

"But it does serve a purpose," hiccuped the deacon; "It will prevent me from getting home. It is done through malice against me, for the efforts I am making to get him and his party out of the council."

During the latter part of this discourse, they had walked, or rather staggered, from side to side of the street. Between the pillars that, before the great fires in Edinburgh, formed the base of the high tenement standing there, and St. Giles' Church, being the entrance into the Parliament Square, and between St. Giles' and the Exchange buildings, the full moon threw a stream of light, filling both the openings, and leaving all above and below involved in deep shade. It was the moon's rays thus thrown upon the ground, and reaching up to the second windows of the houses, that formed the wall which the two officials observed.

"Deil tak me," ejaculated the deacon, "but this is a fine trick to play upon the deacon of an incorporation in his own town! Were it not for exposing myself at this untimorous hour, I would raise the town, and pull it down at the head of the people. Faith, Tom, I will do it!" And he was on the point of shouting aloud at the pitch of his

voice, when the more prudent treasurer put his hand upon the mouth of the enraged deacon.

"For mercy's sake, be quiet!" said he. "What are you going to be about? Is this a time of night for a member of council to make a riot, and expose himself in the High Street? To-morrow will be time enough to pull it down by force, if you cannot get a vote of the council to authorise it. No doubt it is a round-about way and a sair climb; but just, like a wise and prudent man, as you always are, put up with it for one night, and come along down the Fishmarket Close, up the Cowgate, and climb the West Bow, to the deaconess, who, I have no doubt, is weary waiting on you."

"Faith, Tom, I am in part persuaded you advise well for once," replied the deacon; "so I will act upon it, although I am your deacon, and all advice ought to come from me."

And away they trudged. Both were corpulent men; but the deacon, having been several times in the council, was by much the heavier of the two. Down they went by the Fishmarket Close, and up the Cowgate, the deacon, sulky and silent, meditating all the way vengeance against the provost; but, in ascending the steep and winding Bow, his patience entirely left him; he stopped, more than once, to wipe the perspiration from his brow, recover his breath, and mutter curses on the head of the official. At length, they reached the deacon's home, where his patient spouse waited his arrival. Without uttering a word, he threw himself upon a chair, placing his hat and wig upon a table. It was some minutes before he recovered his breath sufficiently to answer the questions of his anxious wife, or give vent to the anger that was consuming him. At length, to the fifty-times put questions of—

"Deacon, what has vexed you so sorely? what has happened to keep you so late?" he broke forth—

"What vexes me? what has kept me so late? You may, with good reason, inquire that, woman. Our pretty provost is the sole cause. You may be thankful that you have seen my face this night." And he commenced and gave an exaggerated account of the immense wall that the provost had caused to be built, from the Crames to the Royal Exchange, reaching as high as the third story of the houses; and the great length of time he had been detained in examining it, to discover a way to get over or through it—all which the simple deaconess believed, and heartily joined her husband in abusing the provost.

"Had a wall been built across the Castlehill," she said, "when the highlandmen were in the town, and the cannon balls flying down the street, I could have known the use of it; but to build a wall between the Crames and the Royal Exchange, to keep the Lawnmarket and Castlehill people from kirk and market—surely the man's mad!"

The treasurer had been for some time gone ere the worthy couple retired to rest, big with the events that were to be transacted on the morrow, for the downfall of the innovating provost. The morning was still grey, the sun was not above the horizon, when the deaconess, as was her wont, arose to begin her household duties; but, anxious to communicate the strange conduct of the provost, in raising the wall of partition in the city, she seized her water stoups, and hurried to the public well at the Bowhead, to replenish them, and ease her overcharged mind of the mighty circumstance. Early as the hour was, many of the wives of the good citizens were already there, seated on their water stoups, and awaiting their turn to be supplied—their shrill voices mixing with those of the more sonorous tones of the highland water-carriers, and rising in violent contention on the stillness of the morning, like the confusion of Babel.

The sensation caused by the relation to the deaconess of

her husband's adventure of the preceding evening, was nothing impaired by the story being related at second-hand. Arms were raised in astonishment as she proceeded with her marvellous tale of the high wall built in so short a space by the provost. After some time spent in fruitless debate, it was agreed that they should go down in a body and examine this bold encroachment upon the citizens—and away they went, with the indignant deaconess at their head.

For some hundred feet down the Lawnmarket, the buildings of the jail and Luckenbooths hid that part of the street from the phalanx of Amazons; but, intent to reconnoitre where the wall of offence was said to stand, they reached the Luckenbooths, and a shout of laughter and derision burst from the band. The deaconess stood petrified, the image of shame and anger. No wall was there—everything stood as it had done for years!

“Lucky Dickson,” cried one, “ye hae gien us a gowk’s errand. I trow the deacon has been fu’ yestreen. Where is the fearfu’ wa’ ye spak o’, that he neither could get through nor owre? Ha! ha! ha!”

“Did ye really believe what he told you, Mrs. Dickson?” screamed another. “It was a silly excuse for being owre late with his cronies. He surely thinks you a silly woman to believe such tales. Were my husband to serve me so, I would let him hear of it on the deafest side of his head.”

“You need not doubt but that he shall hear of it,” responded the deaconess; “and that before long. But, dear me, there must have been some witchcraft played off upon him and the treasurer last night; for, as true as death, they baith said they saw it with their een. There’s been glamour in it. I fear Major Weir is playing more tricks in the town than riding his coach. There was no cause to tell me a lie as an excuse, for I am always happy to see him come hame safe at ony hour.”

"Come home, my good woman, and I shall accompany you."

"I have no home," was her sad reply. "Alas! I have no home but the grave. I am a poor, silly, undone woman, in my old age. Comfortable, and even rich as I was, I am now destitute. I have neither house nor hall to cover my grey hairs. Oh, if I were only dead and buried out of this sinful world, to hide the shame of my own child. An hour is scarce passed since I thought my heart would burst in my bosom before I would be enabled to reach the Greyfriars' churchyard, to lay my head upon Willie Horner's grave, and the graves of my innocent babes that sleep in peace by his side. I feared my strength would fail; for all I wish is to die there. I did reach the object of my wish, and laid myself upon the cold turf, and prayed for death to join as he had separated us; but my heart refused to break, and tears that were denied me before, began to stream from my eyes. The fear of unearthly sights came strong upon me, stronger even than my grief. Strange moanings and sounds came on the faint night wind, from Bloody Mackenzie's tomb, and the bright moonlight made the tombstones look like unearthly things. I rose and fled. I will tarry here, and die in sight of the gallows stone; for it was here my only brother fell, killed by a shot from cruel Porteous' gun; and on the fatal tree which that stone is meant to support, my grandfather cheerfully gave his testimony for the covenanted rights of a persecuted kirk. Leave me, Thomas Kerr—leave me to my destiny. I can die here with pleasure; and it is time I were dead. To whom can a mother look for comfort or pity, when her own son has turned her out upon a cold world? I am as Rachel mourning for her children. I will not be comforted." And the mourner wrapped her mantle round her head with the energy of despair, and, bending it upon the well, burst anew into an agony of sobs and tears.

The treasurer felt himself in an awkward situation. He paused, and began to revolve in his mind what was best to be done at the moment—whether to obey the widow or the dictates of humanity. His better feeling prompted him to stay and do all in his power for the mourner, whom he had known in happier times; but his caution and avarice, backed by the dread of his spouse, urged him, with a force he felt every moment less able to resist, to leave her and hurry home. As he stood irresolute, the voice of the stern monitor sounded in the auricles of his heart like the knell of doom, and roused into fearful energy feelings he had long treated lightly, or striven to suppress when they rose upon him with greater force. He ran like a guilty criminal from the spot. The wailings of the crushed and pitiable object he had left, had given them a force he had never before known, and he urged his way down the Cowgate head as if he wished to fly from himself—the traces of the evening's enjoyments having fled, and their place being supplied by the pangs of an awakened conscience. There was, indeed, too much cause for his agitation, often hinted at by his acquaintances, but in its full extent only known in his own family—a striking similarity between the situation of his own mother and that of Widow Horner. The cases of the two aged individuals agreed in all points, save that he had not yet turned her out of doors; and conscience told him that even that result had been prevented, more by the patient endurance of his worthy parent herself, than any kindly feeling on the part of her son.

The father of the treasurer, and the husband of Widow Horner, had both been industrious, and, for their rank in life, wealthy burgesses of the city. At their death, they had left their widows with an only child to succeed them and be a comfort to their mothers, who had struggled hard to retain and add to the wealth, until their sons were of

age to succeed and manage it for themselves. Their sole and rich reward, as they anticipated, would be the pleasure of witnessing the prosperity of their sons. That they would be ungrateful, was an idea so repugnant to their maternal feelings, that, for a moment, it was never harboured in their bosoms. A cruel reality was fated to falsify their anticipations.

The treasurer had, before he was twenty-five years of age, married a female, whom his fond mother had thought unworthy of her son; and to prevent the marriage she had certainly done all that lay in her power. Her endeavours and remonstrances had only served to hasten the event she wished so much to retard and hinder from taking place; the consequence was, that the hated alliance was made several weeks before she was made aware of it, by the kindness of a gossiping neighbour or two. Much as she felt, and sore as her heart was wrung, she, like a prudent woman, shed her tears of bitter anguish at the want of filial regard in her son, in secret. She at once resolved to pardon this act of ingratitude, and, for her son's sake, to receive her unwelcome daughter-in-law with all the kindness she could assume on the trying occasion. Not so her daughter-in-law, who was of an overbearing, subtile, and vindictive turn of mind. The mother of her husband had wounded her pride; she resolved never to forget or forgive; and, before she had crossed her threshold, a deep revenge was vowed against her, as soon as it was in her power to execute it. The first meeting was embarrassing on both sides; each had feelings to contend against and disguise; yet it passed off well to outward appearance—the widow from love to her son, striving to love his wife—the latter, again, with feigned smiles and meekness, affecting to gain her mother-in-law's esteem; and so well did she act her part, that, before many days after their first interview had passed, Thomas was requested to bring

his wife into the house, to reside in the family, and to save the expense of a separate establishment. From that hour the house of Widow Kerr began to cease to be her own, for the first few months almost imperceptibly. Thomas, although a spoiled child, was not naturally of an unfeeling disposition, but selfish and capricious from over-indulgence. Amidst all his faults, there was still a love and esteem of his mother, which his wife, seeing it would be dangerous openly to attack it, had resolved to undermine, and therefore laid her wicked schemes accordingly. In the presence of her husband, she was, for a time, all smiles and affability; but, in his absence, she said and did a thousand little nameless things, to tease and irritate the good old dame. This produced complaints to her son, who, when he spoke to his wife of them, was only answered by her tears and lamentations, for the misery she suffered in being the object of his mother's dislike. To himself she referred, if she did not do all in her power to please his mother. These scenes had become of almost daily occurrence, and were so artfully managed, that the mother had the appearance of being in the fault. Gradually, the son's affection became deadened towards his parent; she had ceased to complain, and now suffered in silence. For her there was no redress—for, in a fit of fondness, she had made over to her son all she possessed in the world. She was thus in his power; yet her heart revolted at exposing his cruelty. The revenge of the wife was not complete, even after the spirit of the victim was completely crushed, and she had ceased to complain. Often the malignant woman would affect lowness of spirits, and even tears, refusing to tell the cause of her grief until urged by endearments, and obtaining an assurance that he would not regard her folly in yielding to her feelings; but she could not help it—were it not for her love to him, she knew not in what she had ever offended his mother.

save in preferring him to every other lover who had sought her hand. Thus, partly by artifice, but more by her imperious turn of mind, which she had for years ceased to conceal, the treasurer was completely subdued to her dictation ; and, by a just retribution, he was punished for his want of filial affection, for he was as much the sufferer from her temper as his mother was the victim of her malice. With a crushed heart, the old woman ate her morsel in the kitchen, moistened by her tears. Even her grandchildren were taught to insult and wound her feelings. So short-sighted is human nature, the parents did not perceive that by this proceeding they were laying rods in pickle for themselves, which, in due time, would be brought in use, when the recollection of their own conduct would give tenfold poignancy to every blow.

On the occasion to which we have alluded, the situation and wailings of Widow Horner still rung in the ears of the treasurer. All his acts of unkindness to his parent passed before him like a hideous phantasmagoria as he hurried down the Cowgate. He even became afraid of himself, as scene after scene arose to his awakened conscience—all the misery and indignities that had been heaped upon his parent by his termagant wife, he himself either looking on with indifference, or supporting his spouse in her cruelty. Goaded by remorse, he still hurried on. The celerity of his movements seemed to relieve him. He had formed no fixed resolution as to how he was to act upon his arrival at home. A dreamy idea floated in his tortured mind that he had some fearful act to perform to ease it, and do justice to his parent ; yet, as often as he came to the resolution to dare every consequence, his courage would again quail at the thought of encountering one who had, in all contentions, ever been the victor, and riveted her chains the more closely around him on every attempt he had made to break them. In this pitiable state, he had got as

far towards home as the foot of the College Wynd, when the sound of a carriage approaching rapidly from the east roused him and put all other thoughts to flight. With a start of horror and alarm, he groaned—"The Lord have mercy upon me! The Major's coach! If I see it, my days are numbered." And, with an effort resembling the energy of despair, he rushed into a stair foot, and, placing both his hands upon his face to shut out from his sight the fearful object, supported himself by leaning upon the wall. As the sound increased, so did the treasurer's fears; but what words can express his agony when it drew up at the foot of the very stair in which he stood, and a sepulchral voice issued from it—

"Is he here?"

"Just come," was the reply in a similar tone.

"Then all's right."

"O God! have mercy on my sinful soul!" screamed the treasurer, as he sank senseless out of the foot of the stair upon the street.

How long he remained in this state, or what passed in the interval, he could give no account. When he awoke to consciousness, he found himself seated in a carriage jolting along at a great speed, supported on each side by what appeared to him headless trunks; for the bright moonlight shone in at the carriage window, and exhibited two heads detached from their bodies dangling from the top. The glance was momentary. Uttering a deep groan, he shut his eyes to avoid the fearful sight. He would have spoken; but his palsied tongue refused to move, even to implore for mercy. Wringing his hands in despair, he would have sunk to the bottom of the coach upon his knees, but was restrained by the two figures. He felt their grasp upon his arms, firm as one of his own vices. The same fearful voice he had first heard fell again on his ear—"Sit still. Utter no cry. Make a clean breast, as

you hope for mercy at the major's tribunal. He knows you well; but wishes to test your truth. Proceed!"

With a memory that called up every deed he had ever done, and sunk to nothingness any of the actions he had at one time thought good, he seemed as if he now stood before his Creator. All his days on earth appeared to have been one long black scene of sin and neglected duties. His head sunk upon his breast, and the tears of repentance moistened his bosom. When he had finished his minute confession, a pause ensued of a few minutes. The moon, now far in the west, was sinking behind a dense mass of clouds. The wind began to blow fitfully, with a melancholy sound, along the few objects that interrupted its way, and around the fearful conveyance in which he sat, more dead than alive. The measured tramp of the horses, and rattling of the carriage, fell on his ear like the knell of death. He felt a load at his heart, as if the blood refused to leave it and perform its functions. Human nature could not have sustained itself under such circumstances much longer. The carriage stopped; the door opened with violence; his breathing became like a quick succession of sobs; his ears whizzed, almost producing deafness. Still he was fearfully awake to every sensation; a painful vitality seemed to endow every nerve with tenfold its wonted activity; all were in action at the moment; his whole frame tingled; and the muscles seemed to quiver on his bones. The same hollow voice broke the silence.

"Thomas Kerr, your sincerity and contrition has delivered you from my power this once. Beware of a relapse. Go, do the duty of a son to your worthy parent. You have been a worse man than ever I was on earth. I have my parent's blessing with me in the midst of my sufferings; and there is a soothing in it which the wretched can alone feel."

Quick as thought he was lifted from the coach and

seated upon the ground. With the speed of a whirlwind, as it appeared to him, the carriage disappeared, and the sound died away. For some time he sat bewildered, as if he had fallen from the clouds. Gradually he began to breathe more freely, and felt as if a fearful nightmare had just passed away. Slowly the events of the night rose in regular succession. The forlorn and desolate widow; the hideous spectres in the coach, that, without heads, spake and moved with such energy—the whole now passed before him so vividly that he shuddered. At first he hoped all had been a fearful dream; but the cold, damp ground on which he sat banished the fond idea. He felt, in all its force, that he was now wide awake, as he groped with his hands and touched the damp grass beneath him. All around was enveloped in impenetrable darkness. Not one star shone in the murky sky. How much of the night had passed, or where he at present was, he had no means of ascertaining. The first use he made of his restored faculties was to rise upon his knees, and pour out his soul to God, imploring pardon and protection in this hour of suffering. He rose with a heart much lightened, and felt his energies restored. Stumbling onwards, he proceeded, he knew not whither, until, bruised by falls and faint from exhaustion, he again seated himself upon a stone, to wait patiently the approach of dawn. Thus, melancholy and pensive, he sat, eager to catch the faintest sound; but all was silent as the grave, save the faint rustling of the long grass, waving around him in the night breeze, that was chilling his vitals, as it, in fitful gusts, swept past him. The hope of surviving the night had almost forsaken him, when the distant tramp of a horse fell on his longing ears. Then the cheerful sound of a popular air, whistled to cheer the darkness, gladdened his heart. In an ecstasy of pleasure, he sprung to his feet. The rolling of wheels over the rugged road, was soon added to the cheering sounds. With caution he

approached them over hedge and ditch, until, dark as it was, he could discern the object of his search almost before him—a carrier's cart, with the driver seated upon the top, whistling and cracking his whip to the time.

“Stop friend, for mercy's sake, and take me up beside you.”

“Na, na,” replied the carrier; “I will do no such foolish action. Hap, Bassie! hap!” And, smacking his whip, the horse increased its speed. “Come not near my cart, or I will make Cæsar tear you in pieces. Look to him, Cæsar!” And the snarling of a dog gave fearful warning to the poor treasurer to keep at a distance; but, rendered desperate by his situation, he continued to follow, calling out—

“Stop, if you are a Christian; for mercy's sake, stop and hear me. I am a poor lost creature, sick and unable to harm, but rich enough to reward you, if you will save my life. I am no robber, but a decent burgess and freeman of Edinburgh; and where I am at present I cannot tell.”

“Woo, Bassie! woo!” responded the carrier. “Silence, Cæsar! Preserve us from all evil! Amen! Sure you cannot be Thomas Kerr, whose shop is in Saint Mary's Wynd?”

“The very same; but who are you that know my voice?”

“Who should I be,” rejoined he, “but Watty Clink-scales, the North-Berwick carrier, on my way to the town; for you may know well enough that Wednesday morning is my time to be in Edinburgh; but come up beside me, man, and do not stand longer there. If you have lost yourself, as you say, I will with pleasure give you a ride home this dark morning; but tell me how, in all the world, came you to be standing at the Figgate Whins, instead of being in your warm bed? I am thinking, friend Kerr, you have been at a corporation supper last night.”

While the carrier was speaking, the treasurer mounted the cart, and took his seat beside him. They moved slowly on. To all the questions of the carrier, evasive answers were returned; the treasurer felt no desire to be communicative. As they reached the Watergate, the first rays of morning shone upon Arthur's Seat and the Calton Hill. Before they entered, the treasurer dismounted, having first rewarded his conveyer to the town, and proceeded to his home by the south back of the Canongate, faint and unwell. When he reached his own door, he was nearly exhausted. It was opened to him by his anxious mother, who had watched for him through the whole night. Alarmed by his haggard and sickly appearance, timidly she inquired what had happened to him, to cause such an alteration in his looks in so short a time. The tears started into his eyes as he looked at her venerable form, degraded by her attire. He took her hand in both his, and, pressing it to his lips, faltered out—

"Oh, my mother! can you pardon your undutiful son? Only say you will forgive me."

"Tammy, my bairn," she replied, "what have I to pardon? Is not all my pleasure in life to see you happy? What signifies what becomes of me, the few years I have to be on earth? But you are ill, my son—you are very ill!"

"I am indeed very unwell, both in body and mind," said he. "Say you pardon me, for the manner in which I have allowed you to be treated since my marriage; and give me your blessing, lest I die without hearing you pronounce it."

"Bless you, my Thomas, and all that is yours, my son! with my blessing, and the blessing of God, which is above all riches! But go to your bed, my bairn, and do not let me make dispeace in the family."

At this moment his spouse opened the door of the bed-

room, and began, in her usual manner, to rate and abuse him for keeping untimous hours. Still holding his mother's hands in his, he commanded her, in a voice he had never before assumed to her, to be silent. She looked at him in amazement, as if she had doubted the reality of his presence ; and was on the point of becoming more violent, when his fierce glance, immediately followed by the sunken, sickly look which one night of suffering had given him, alarmed her for his safety, and she desisted, anxiously assisting his mother to undress and put him to bed.

He soon fell into a troubled sleep, from which he awoke in the afternoon, unrefreshed and feverish. His wife was seated by his bed when he awoke. Turning his languid eye towards her, he inquired for his mother. A scene of angry altercation would have ensued ; but he was too ill to reply to the irritating language and reproaches of his spouse. The anger increased his fever, and delirium came on towards the evening. A physician was sent for, who at once pronounced his life to be in extreme danger ; and, indeed, for many days it was despained of.

The horrors of that night were the theme of his discourse, while the fever raged in his brain. The smallest noise, even the opening of a door, made him shreik and struggle to escape from those who watched him. His efforts were accompanied by cries for mercy from Major Weir ; his bed was the coach, and his wife and mother the headless phantoms. Clinkscales had told the manner and where he had found him, on the morning he was taken ill. The sensation this excited through the city became extreme. Deacon Dickson told the hour in which he left his house, and the language of the sufferer filled up the space until he was met by the carrier. The nocturnal apparition of the major's carriage had, for many years, been a nursery tale of Edinburgh. Many firmly believed in its reality. There were not wanting several who affirmed they had

seen it; and scarce an inhabitant of the Cowgate or St. Mary's Wynd, but thought they had heard it often before the present occurrence.

That the treasurer had by some means been transported to the Figgate Whins in the major's coach, a great many firmly believed; for two of the incorporation on the same night had been alarmed by a coach driving furiously down the Cowgate; but they could not describe its appearance, as they had hid themselves until it passed, fearful of seeing the spectre carriage and its unearthly attendants. It was at least certain that, of late, many had been aroused out of their sleep by the noise of a carriage; and, the report gaining ground, the terror of the citizens became so great that few chose to be upon any of the streets after twelve at night, unless urged by extreme necessity. This state of foolish alarm, as the magistrates called it, could not be allowed to continue within their jurisdiction; and they resolved to investigate the whole affair. Several were examined privately; but the treasurer was too ill to be spoken to, even by his friend the deacon. There was a strange harmony in the statements of several who had really distinctly heard the sounds of horses' feet, and the rumbling of a carriage, and the ravings of the unfortunate treasurer. The authorities were completely at a stand how to proceed. Several shook their heads and looked grave; others proposed to request the ministers of the city to watch the major's carriage, and pray it out of the city. But the provost's committee sent for the captain of the train-bands, and consulted with him: he agreed to have twelve of the band and six of the town-guard in readiness by twelve at night, to waylay the cause of annoyance, should it make its appearance, and unravel the mystery. That there was some unlawful purpose connected with it, several of the council had little doubt. These meetings were private, and the proceedings are not on record to

guide us. It was with considerable difficulty the captain could get the number of his band required for the duty; they chose rather to pay the fine, believing it to be a real affair of diablerie; for their earliest recollections were associated with the truth of the major's night airings. For several nights the watch was strictly kept by many of the citizens; but in vain. No appearance disturbed the usual stillness of the night in the city; not even the sound of a carriage was heard. The whole affair gradually lost its intense interest, and ceased to be the engrossing theme of conversation. The sceptics triumphed over their believing acquaintance; and the mysterious occurrence was allowed to rest.

The election week for deacon of the crafts at length arrived. All was bustle among the freemen; the rival candidates canvassing and treating, and their partisans bustling about everywhere. City politics ran high; but the treasurer, although recovered, was still too weak to take an active part in the proceedings. Deacon Dickson, on this account, redoubled his exertions—for the indisposition of his treasurer had deranged his plans; and it was of great importance, in his eyes, to have one of his party elected in his place. Had Kerr been able to move about, to visit and flatter his supporters, his election was next to certain, so well had the whole affair been managed. Kerr was accordingly dropped by him, and a successor pitched upon, who could at this eventful period aid him in his efforts against the candidate of the Drummondites, as the supporters of the provost were called.

On the Thursday, when the long lists were voted, the deacon carried his list, and every one of the six were tried men, and hostile to the innovations of the provost and his party. The deacon was in great spirits, and told the treasurer, whom he visited as soon as his triumph was

secure, that, if not cut off the list in shortening the leet, his election was sure. On the list coming down from the council, neither Kerr nor the person Dickson wished were on the leet; both had been struck off, and the choice behoved to fall upon one of three, none of whom had hoped, at this time, to succeed to office. Their joy was so much the greater, and the election dinner not less substantial.

It was the evening of the election, closely bordering upon the morning—for all respected the Sabbath-day, and even on this joyous occasion, would not infringe upon it—that a party of some ten or twelve were seen to issue from one of the narrow closes in the High Street, two and two, arm in arm, dressed in the first style of fashion, with bushy wigs, cocked hats, and gold-headed canes. At their head was, now old Deacon Dickson, and his successor in office. They were on their way, accompanying their new deacon home to his residence, near the foot of St. Mary's Wynd in the Cowgate, and to congratulate the deaconess on her husband's elevation to the council. None of them were exactly tipsy; but in that middle state when men do not stand upon niceties, neither are scared by trifles. The fears of the major's coach were not upon them; or, if any thought of it came over them, their numbers gave them confidence. Leaving the High Street, they proceeded down Merlin's Wynd to the Cowgate. Scarce had the head of the procession emerged from the dark thoroughfare, when the sound of a carriage, in rapid advance, fell on their astonished ears. The front stood still, and would have retreated back into the wynd, but could not; for those behind, unconscious of the cause of the stoppage, urged on and forced them out into the street. There was not a moment for reflection, scarce to utter a cry, before the fearful equipage was full upon them. Retreat was still impossible; and those in front, by the pressure from behind,

becoming desperate by their situation, the two deacons seized the reins of the horses, to prevent their being ridden over. In a second, the head of the coachman (held in his hand !) was launched at Deacon Dickson, with so true an aim that it felled him to the ground, with the loss of his hat and wig. Though stunned by the blow, his presence of mind did not forsake him. Still holding on by the reins, and dragged by the horses, he called lustily for his companions to cut the traces. The head of the coachman, in the meantime, had returned to his hand, and been launched forth, with various effect, on the aggressors. Other heads flew from the windows on each side, and from the coach-box, in rapid, darting motions. The cries of the assailants resounded through the stillness of the night ; fear had fled their bosoms ; there was scarce one but had received contusions from the flying heads, and rage urged them on to revenge. Candles began to appear at the windows, exhibiting faces pale with fear. Some of the bolder of the male inhabitants, recognising the voice of some relative or acquaintance in the cries of the assailants, ran to the street and joined the fray. Dickson, who had never relinquished his first hold, recovered himself, severely hurt as he was by the feet of the horses, which were urged on, short as the struggle was, up to the College Wynd, in spite of the resistance. At the moment the carriage reached the foot of the wynd, the door on the left burst open, and two figures leaped out, disappearing instantly, although closely pursued. In the confusion of the pursuit, the coachman also disappeared. No one could tell how, or in what manner he had fled, he appeared to fall from the box among the crowd ; and, when several stooped to lift and secure him, all that remained in their hands was a greatcoat, with basket work within the shoulders, so contrived as to conceal the head and neck of the wearer, to which was fastened a stout cord, the other end of which was attached

to an artificial head, entangled in the strife between the horses and the pole of the coach. Two similar dresses were also found inside. The coach was heavily laden; but with what, the authorities never could discover, although envious persons said that several of the tradesmen's wives in the Cowgate afterwards wore silk gowns that had never before had one in their family, had better and stronger tea at their parties, and absolutely abounded in tobacco for many weeks. But whether these were the spoils of the combat with the infernal coach, or the natural results of successful industry, was long a matter of debate.

As for the coach and horses, they became the prize of Deacon Dickson and his friends, never having been claimed by the major. The sensation created on the following day by the exaggerated reports of the fearful rencounter and unheard of bravery of the tradesmen, was in proportion to the occasion. Several of the assailants were reported to have been killed, and, among the rest, the deacon. For several days, the inn-yard of the White Hart was crowded to excess to view the carriage and horses. As for the deacon, no doubt, he was considerably bruised about the legs; but the glory he had acquired was a medicine far more efficacious to his hurts than any the faculty could have prescribed. At the first toll of the bells for church, he was seen descending from the Castle Hill towards the Tron Church, limping much more, many thought, than there was occasion for, supported by his battered gold-headed cane on one side, and holding by the arm of the deaconess on the other. With an affected modesty, which no general after the most brilliant victory could better have assumed, he accepted the congratulations he had come out to receive. When he entered the church, a general whisper ran through it, and all eyes were upon him, while the

minister had not yet entered. This was the proudest moment of his life. He had achieved, with the assistance of a few friends, what the train-bands and city-guard had failed to accomplish; that it was more by accident, and against his will he had performed the feat, he never once allowed to enter his mind, and stoutly denied when he heard it hinted at by those who envied him the glory he had acquired.

As soon as the afternoon's service was over, he proceeded to the treasurer's house, to congratulate him on his re-election to the treasurership, and give a full account of his adventure. To his exaggerated account, Kerr listened with the most intense interest; a feeling of horror crept over his frame as the deacon dwelt upon the blow he had received from the coachman's head, and the efficacious manner in which the two inside phantoms had used theirs, concluding with—

"It was a fearful and unequal strife—devils against mortal men."

"Do you really think they were devils, deacon? Was it really their own heads they threw about?" said the treasurer.

"I am not clear to say they were devils," replied the other; "but they fought like devils. Severe blows they gave, as I feel this moment. They could not be anything canny; for they got out from among our hands like a flash of light."

The deacon's vanity would have tempted him to say he believed them to be not of this earth; but the same feeling restrained him. Where there had been so many actors in the affair, he had as yet had no opportunity of learning their sentiments; and, above all things, he hated to be in a minority, or made an object of ridicule. Turning aside the direct question of the treasurer, he continued—

"Whatever they were, the horses are two as bonny

blacks as any gentleman could wish to put into his carriage. By my troth, I have made a good adventure of it? I mean to propose, and I have no doubt I shall carry my motion, that they and the major's coach be sold, and the proceeds spent in a treat to the incorporation. Make haste, man, and get better. You are as welcome to a share as if you had been one of those present; although, indeed, I cannot give you a share of the glory of putting Major Weir and his devils to the rout—and no small glory it is, on the word of a deacon, treasurer."

The load that had for many days pressed down the treasurer's spirits gradually passed off as the deacon proceeded, and a new light shone on his mind; his countenance brightened up.

"Deacon," he said, "the truth begins to dawn upon me, and I feel a new man. Confess at once that the whole has been a contrivance of the smugglers to run their goods, availing themselves of the real major's coach. It was a bold game, deacon, and, like all unlawful games, a losing one in the end. Still, it is strange what inducement they could have had for their cruel conduct to me on that miserable night, or how I was enabled to survive, or retained my reason. I have been often lost in fearful misery upon this subject since the fever left me; but you, my friend, have restored peace to my mind."

And they parted for the evening. The treasurer's recovery was now most rapid. In a few days, all traces of his illness were nearly obliterated, and he went about his affairs as formerly. An altered man—all his wife's influence for evil was gone for ever; calmly and dispassionately he remonstrated with her; for a few days she struggled hard to retain her abused power; tears and threatened desertion of his house were used—but he heard her unmoved, still keeping his stern resolve with a quietness of manner which her cunning soon perceived it was not in

her power to shake. She ceased to endeavour to shake it. His mother was restored to her proper station, and all was henceforth peace and harmony.

Several years had rolled on. The deaconship was, next election, bestowed upon Treasurer Kerr. He had served with credit, and his business prospered. The adventure with the major's coach was only talked of as an event of times long passed, when, one forenoon, an elderly person, in a seaman's dress, much soiled, entered his workshop, and, addressing him by name, requested employment. Being very much in want of men at the time, he at once said he had no objection to employ him, if he was a good hand.

"I cannot say, I am, now what I once was in this same shop," he replied. "It is long since I forsook the craft; but, if you are willing to employ me, I will do my best."

The stranger was at once engaged, and gave satisfaction to his employer—betraying a knowledge of events that had happened to the family, and that were only traditional to his master. His curiosity became awakened; to gratify which, he took the man home, one evening, after his day's work was over. For some time after they entered the house, the stranger became pensive and reserved—his eyes, every opportunity, wandering to the mother of his master, with a look of anxious suspense. At length, he arose from his seat, and said, in a voice tremulous with emotion—

"Mistress! my ever-revered mistress! have you entirely forgot Watty Brown, the runaway apprentice of your husband?"

"Watty Brown, the yellow-haired laddie," ejaculated she, "I can never forget. He was always a favourite of mine. You cannot be him; your hair is grey?"

"My good mistress, old and grey-headed as you see me," said he, "I am Watty Brown; but much has passed over my once yellow head to bleach it white as you see. My

master here was but an infant in your arms, when I left Edinburgh. Often have I rocked him in his cradle. After all that has passed, I am here again, safe. I am sure there is no one present would bring me into trouble for what is now so long passed."

"How time flies!" said she. "The Porteous mob is in my mind as if it had happened last week. O Watty! you were always a reckless lad. Sore, sore you have rued, I do not doubt, that night. Do tell us what has come of you since?"

"Well, mistress, you recollect there was little love between the apprentices of Edinburgh and Captain Porteous. All this might have passed off in smart skirmishes on a king's birthday, or so; but his brutal behaviour at poor Robinson's execution, and slaughter of the townsmen, could not be forgiven by lord or tradesman. Well, as all the land knows, he was condemned, and all were satisfied; for the guilty was to suffer. But his pardon came; the bloodshedder of the innocent was to leave the jail as if he had done nothing wrong! Was this to be endured? Murmurs and threats were in every tradesman's mouth; the feuds of the apprentices were quelled, for a time; all colours joined in hatred of the murderer. Yet no plan of operations was adopted. In this combustible frame of mind, the drums of the city beat to arms. I rushed from this very house to know the cause, and saw the trades' lads crowding towards the jail. I inquired what was their intention.

"'To execute righteous judgment!' a strange voice said, in the crowd.

"I returned to the shop; and, taking the forehammer, as the best weapon I could find, in my haste, with good will joined, and was at the door amongst the foremost of those who attempted to break it open. Numbers had torches. Lustily did I apply my hammer to its studded front. Vainly

did I exert myself, until fire was put to it, when it at length gave way. As I ceased from my efforts, one of the crowd, carrying a torch, put a guinea into my hand, and said—

“ ‘ Well done, my good lad. Take this ; you have wrought for it. If you are like to come to trouble for this night’s work, fly to Anstruther, and you will find a friend.’ ”

While he spoke, those who had entered the jail were dragging Porteous down the stairs. My heart melted within me at the piteous sight. My anger left me, as his wailing voice implored mercy. I left the throng, who were hurrying him up towards the Lawnmarket, and hastened back to the workshop, where I deposited the hammer, and threw myself upon my bed ; but I could not remain. The image of the wretched man, as he was dragged forth, appeared to be by my side. Partly to know the result, partly to ease my mind, I went again into the street. The crowds were stealing quietly to their homes. From some neighbour apprentices I learned the fatal catastrophe. I now became greatly alarmed for my safety, as numbers who knew me well had seen my efforts against the door of the jail. Bitterly did I now regret the active part I had taken. My immediate impulse was to fly from the city ; but in what direction I knew not. Thus irresolute, I stood at the Netherbow Port, when the same person that gave me the guinea at the jail-door approached to where I stood. Embracing the opportunity, I told him the fear I was in of being informed upon, when the magistrates began to investigate and endeavour to discover those who had been active in the affair.

“ ‘ Well, my good fellow, follow me. It will not serve your purpose standing there.’ ”

There were about a dozen along with him. We proceeded to the beach at Fisherrow—going round Arthur’s Seat, by Duddingston—and were joined by many others. Two boats lay for them, on the beach, at a distance from

the harbour. We went on board and set sail for Fife, where we arrived before morning dawned. I found my new friend and acquaintance was captain and owner of a small vessel, who traded to the coast of Holland. He scrupled not to run a cargo upon his own account, without putting the revenue officers to any trouble, either measuring or weighing it. He had been the intimate friend of Robinson, and often sailed in the same vessel. I joined his crew; and, on the following day, we sailed for Antwerp. But why should I trouble you with the various turns my fortunes have taken for the last thirty-seven years? At times, I was stationary, and wrought at my trade; at others, I was at sea. My home has principally been in Rotterdam; but my heart has ever been in Auld Reekie. Many a time I joined the crew of a lugger, and clubbed my proportion of the adventure; my object being—more than the gain—to get a sight of it; for I feared to come to town—being ignorant as to how matters stood regarding my share in the Porteous riot. We heard in Holland only of the threats of the government; but I was always rejoiced to hear that no one had been convicted. Several years had passed before it was safe for me to return; and, when it was, I could not endure the thought of returning to be a bound apprentice, to serve out the few months of my engagement that were to run when I left my master. Years passed on. I had accumulated several hundred guilders, with the view of coming to end my days in Edinburgh, when I got acquainted with a townsman deeply engaged in the smuggling line. I unfortunately embarked my all. He had some associates in the Cowgate, who disposed of, to great advantage, any goods he succeeded in bringing to them. His colleagues on shore had provided a coach and horses, with suitable dresses, to personate Major Weir's carriage, agreeably to the most approved description. The coach and horses were furnished by an innkeeper,

whom they supplied with liquors at a low rate. My unfortunate adventure left the port, and I anxiously waited its return for several months; but neither ship nor friend made their appearance. At length he came to my lodgings in the utmost poverty—all had been lost. Of what use was complaint? He had lost ten times more than I had—everything had gone against him. His narrative was short. He reached the coast in safety, and landed his cargo in part, when he was forced to run for it, a revenue cutter coming in sight. After a long chase, he was forced to run his vessel on shore, near St. Andrew's, and got ashore with only his clothes, and the little cash he had on board. He returned to where his goods were deposited—all that were saved. The coach was rigged out, and reached the Cowgate in the usual manner, when it was attacked and captured, in spite of stout resistance, by a party of citizens. What of the goods remained in the neighbourhood of Musselburgh, were detained for the loss of the horses and coach. I was now sick of Holland, and resolved to return, poor as I left it, to the haunts of my happiest recollections. To be rich, and riches still accumulating in a foreign land, the idea of what we can at any time enjoy, a return—makes it bearable. But poverty and disappointment sadden the heart of the exile; and make the toil that would be counted light at home, a burden that sinks him early in a foreign grave."

"Did your partner make no mention of carrying off one of the townsmen in the coach?" said the treasurer.

"Excuse me, master, for not mentioning it," replied Walter. "He did give me a full account of all that happened to you, and all you said; and regretted, when he heard of your illness, what, at the time, he was forced to do in self-preservation. When you fell out of the stair he meant to enter, he knew not who you were—a friend he knew you could not be, for only other two in the city had his secret.

That you were a revenue officer, on the look-out for him, was his first idea. He was as much alarmed as you, until he found you were insensible. Not a moment was to be lost. The goods were hurried out, and you placed in the carriage, which was on its way from town before you showed any symptoms of returning consciousness. His first intention was to carry you on board his lugger, and convey you to Holland, then sell you to the Dutch East India Company, that you might never return to tell what you had been a witness of that night. The terror you were in, the sincerity of your confession, and belief that you were in the power of the major, saved you from the miserable fate he had fixed for you. Pity struggled against the caution and avarice which urged him to take you away. Pity triumphed—you had been both play and school-fellows in former years. You were released—you know the rest."

The wife and mother scarce breathed, while Wattie related the danger the treasurer had been in; he himself gave a shudder—all thanked God for his escape. Wattie Brown continued in his employ, as foreman over his work, and died about the year 1789. Widow Horner did not long survive that night of intense anguish—she died of a broken heart in her son's house. It was remarked by all, that, while Thomas Kerr prospered, Walter Horner, who was at one time much the richer man, gradually sank into the most abject circumstances, and died a pensioner on his incorporation, more despised than pitied. And thus ends our tale of Major Weir's famous night airings in Edinburgh.

THE DIVINITY STUDENT.

"So fades, so perishes, grows dim, and dies,
All that the world is proud of."

WORDSWORTH.

ALTHOUGH the revelations of a divine philosophy have taught us no more to entertain the blind notions of the Epicureans of old, that everything is the result of chance—or to agree with the Stoics, that the revolutions of the planetary system decree the fates and regulate the actions of mankind—yet the vicissitudes of human life, and the uncertainties of earthly hope, continue no less frequently to be the theme of the poet, and the regret of the philosopher. The truth is deep; nor is it ever suffered to be so long uncalled forth from our memories as to allow of its force being blunted. Striking and melancholy examples continually crowd upon us. Daily we are summoned to behold some noble aspiration blasted—to behold youth cut off in the bud—learning disappointed of its reward—worth suffering under the grip of misfortune—and industry sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind. These are dread and warning lessons to us, yet affording the surest marks of proof, that this sublunary and distempered world cannot be the final abode of man; that the seeds sown here will grow to maturity in a more genial clime; and that the events which now baffle the scrutiny of our moral reason, will yet appear to us revealed in clear and unperplexed beauty.

The story I am now about to narrate is simple in the extreme, yet affording scope for melancholy, and, it is to be hoped, not unprofitable meditation.

Robert Brown, a Scottish carrier, living in a remote district in Roxburghshire, contrived to bring up his family, consisting of five sons, by a course of unwearied industry and rigid economy, to an age at which the youngest had attained his sixteenth year—a time when it was thought by his friends that he might be able to take himself as a burthen from off his father's hands, and set about something towards his ultimate provision for life.

Consistently with their humble condition in the world, his brothers had all received the usual education of the Scottish peasantry—that is to say, they had been taught reading, writing, and the elements of arithmetic; and, at suitable ages, had been alternately called from school to assist in farm work. They were fortunate in obtaining employment from the neighbouring landlords; and, though the servants of different masters, none of them were above two miles distant from their father's cottage. William, the youngest, had been destined from the cradle for something superior to the rest. They looked far forward, through the vista of years, to him as the pride of their old age, and the representative who was to carry down the respectability, credit, and good name of the family, to the succeeding generation. So far from the rest being chagrined at the partiality thus openly avowed, they contributed, “each in his degree,” to the furtherance of the plan chalked out by their parents; judging, with honest pride, if William was destined to move in a sphere somewhat superior to their own, that a portion of the common approbation must necessarily be reflected on themselves, his relations. Thus all were united and amiable; no selfish and grovelling feelings introduced themselves to mar the cordiality of affection, or interfere with motives so upright and so honourable.

The object of this concentrated flood of generous love was certainly not an unworthy one. Having been born some years posterior to the other members of the family,

he had never been a sharer in the youthful sports of his brothers, but was remembered by them as a favourite object on their Saturday evening meetings at their father's cottage. The frame of William was by no means so robust as that of the rest; and his dark glossy hair only set off more plainly the pale, and sometimes sallow hue of complexion. From both of these circumstances, his comparative youth, and his comparative delicacy of constitution, he ran a considerable chance of being, what is commonly termed, a spoiled child. He had, of course, contracted, from indulgence, a waywardness of disposition, which, however, by his innate modesty and good sense, was kept within very excusable limits, and soon wore entirely away, as the forwardness of boyhood began to subside into the more pensive thoughtfulness of maturer years.

After having exhausted all the means of instruction which an adjacent town supplied, he was obliged to have recourse to the grammar school of a neighbouring parish, about four miles distant from his home. For two years, neither summer's heat nor winter's snow were for a day allowed to frustrate his walking thither. He never returned till late in the afternoon; sometimes the evening star was the herald of his approach; and, during the brief days, towards the end or about the commencement of the year, darkness had set in before his face glimmered by the bickering fire of his parental hearth. Habits of temperance had been familiar to him all his days. Some cheese and oaten cake, regularly deposited in his satchel, served him for dinner, during the interval of school hours, after mid-day—and these he ate, walking about or reclining on the turf; but the warm tea and toast always awaited his evening arrival, and were set before him with all a mother's mindfulness and punctuality.

He was diligent at his books; and, being endowed by nature with good parts, he made a very fair and promising

progress. He had none of that intellectual cleverness which makes advances by sudden fits and starts, and then relapses into apathy and idleness; but his steady industry, his attention, and his assiduity, gave omens favourable to his success, while his gentle and conciliatory manners gained him not only the love of his schoolfellows, but the esteem of his instructor.

It was now evident, that, from the pains and expense taken in regard to his education, he was destined for the pulpit—that climax of the honours and distinctions ever aimed at by a poor but respectable Scottish family. Years of rigid economy had been passed, almost without affording any hope as to the ultimate success and attainment of their laudable end.

His destination, almost unknown to himself, having been thus early fixed, it was resolved that he should be sent to Edinburgh, to attend the college there, professedly as a student of divinity. The expense, resulting from this resolution, bore hard upon their slender circumstances; but they were determined still farther to exert themselves, indulging the fond hope, that, one day or other, they would reap the reward of their honourable endeavours in the prosperity of their son.

To the university he set off, amid the ill-concealed tears of some, and the open and hearty blessings of all—so much were they attached to one, who, till that day, had never been even more temporarily separated from them, without many a caution, perhaps little required, to guard against the evil contaminations of the capital—little thinking, in their simple minds, that the slender means allowed him were barely sufficient for necessary purposes, without indulging in any uncalled for luxury, and that gold is the only key that fits pleasure's casket.

He found himself seated in the Scottish metropolis, in a cheap but snug and comfortable lodging, and encompassed

by other sights and sounds than those which he had been accustomed to. The change struck on his heart with a low deep feeling of despondency, which a little time, conjoined with the urbanity and kindness of all around him, was sufficient to dissipate. The immense mass of lofty and majestic buildings, exhibiting their roofs in widening circles around him, and stretching far away, like the broken billows of an ocean, created thoughts of tumult, discord, and perplexity, when contrasted with the serene beauty of the calm pastoral district which he had left; and, amid the nightly crowd of population which engirded him, a sense of his own individual insignificance fell, with a crushing weight, on his spirit. The deeply engrafted strength of virtue and religion, however, at length prevailed, restoring to his mind its usual buoyancy; and he began to see objects in the same degree of relative value, but with a widely enlarged scope of sensation. He set about his studies with vigour and alacrity; and, keeping in recollection the circumstances of his relatives, he determined not only to avoid all unnecessary expense, but to exercise the most rigid economy. Few hours were allowed to sleep, and almost no time allotted to exercise and recreation. The hopes his father entertained he determined should not be frustrated, nor the confidence they reposed in him be shown erroneous, by any negligence on his part; while, by persevering with assiduity and ardour, he trusted, sooner than they expected, to relieve them of the burthen of his support—a burthen which, he knew, could not fail to press heavy on them all, however cheerfully supported.

In a course of the utmost economy, sobriety, and temperance, anxiously endeavouring to allow no opportunity of improvement to pass by unimproved, the winter session wore through, and left behind on his heart very few causes for self-disapprobation.

Towards the end of April, the pale student returned to

the cottage of his father. Worn out by unwearied and unremitting studies, the vernal gales of the country came like a balsam to reanimate his flagging spirits; and the hopes that the object of so much exertion and care would be ultimately crowned with success, gained a strong hold on the mind it had threatened almost to forsake. In the crowd of the city he felt too deeply his own insignificance —an isolated stranger, poor and unknown of all, striving with a feverish hope, at rewards most likely to be carried away by more powerful interests. But here he felt a grain of self-importance return to elevate his fallen thoughts. The budding hawthorn, the singing birds, and the blue sky, were all delightful; and he began to lose his own bosom fears in the general exultation of nature.

The first ebullience of parental joy at his return, together with the congratulations of his affectionate brethren, having gradually subsided, few days were indeed allowed for idle recreation; and the same industrious course was persevered in.

Of the cottage, which consisted of three apartments, one of which served for kitchen, another was entirely set apart for William, that no interruptions might at any time disturb him. In the summer mornings he was up with the lark; but he closed not his book with her evening song. His studies were carried far into the silence of the night, and the belated traveller never failed to mark the taper gleaming from the window of his apartment.

Summer mellowed into autumn, which, with its fruitage, flowers, and yellow corn fields, also passed away; and again the hoar-frost lay whitely at morning on the wall of the little garden. Towards the end of October, our student, a second time, set out on his journey to Edinburgh.

The life of a college student is not one of incident or variety. Day after day calls him to the same routine of

employment; and week is only known from week by the intervention of Sabbath repose. Suffice it, therefore, to say, that the second season passed away like the first, in frugal living and indefatigable exertion, and left our hero, at its close, the same uncorrupted, simple-hearted, and generous-minded youth, as when he first left the shadow of his father's door. His dress and his manners were very little altered. Amid the hum and the bustle of thousands, wealthy and toiling after wealth, he was an individual apart—a hermit standing on the rock, and listening to the roar of life's billowing ocean, but launching not his bark on its dim and dangerous waters.

His delicacy made him feel acutely, that the expenses which he had necessarily incurred, must weigh heavily on those upon whose open, but necessarily circumscribed bounty, he depended. It was, therefore, agreed on, at his own suggestion, to open a school for a season, in some one of the neighbouring villages. He hoped, by this means, to be enabled to raise a small fund for future exigencies, and to be indebted to his own industry for what necessity had hitherto obliged him to be dependent for on the bounty of others. Alas! this commendable design was but the protracting of a course of study already too severe for his tender and delicate constitution.

The scheme was, however, immediately acted on. A school in the village of Sauchieburn was opened, and, in a brief space, everything succeeded to the utmost of his expectations—for the school-room speedily began to fill; and, by a conscientious discharge of his duty to his pupils, the affection of their parents began to flow towards him. Although the quarterly payments were small, he contrived to lay aside by much the larger half. From the natural timidity of his disposition, conjoined with the fear of making acquaintances which might lead him into expenses, he

lived almost alone, spending the leisure of his afternoons in walking with his book in his hand through the fields; his evenings passed over in solitary study.

Not long after his settlement, Mr. Allan, a farmer of some consideration in the neighbourhood, requested him to devote an hour or two daily to the tuition of his boys. In every point of view, this was a favourable circumstance for him. His labours were handsomely remunerated; and an introduction secured for him into a well-informed and rather elegant circle.

The family in whose house he lodged were little removed above the order of peasantry, but remarkable not only for their cleanliness and for the comfort of their dwelling, but for that integrity in their small concerns, and devout feeling of religious truth, still so frequently found united to narrow circumstances in the nooks and byways of Scotland, and constituting, certainly, not the least valuable gem in the coronal of her honour. Here he was regarded with looks of love; and his minutest wants attended to, with that scrupulous zeal which can only be expected from parental tenderness. He was regarded not only as a member of the family, but looked up to as something that was above them—doing honour to their dwelling. Every possible care was taken to render his situation as agreeable as possible to him; and his health was inquired after, by the kind inmates, with the most anxious and affectionate solicitude.

But the dark work was begun within, and the canker, which was to destroy the rose of health, was already committing dreadful ravages. He uttered no complaint; and, if pain was felt, its pangs were unacknowledged. A languor of the eye, an unusual paleness of the face, and the bursting forth of large drops of perspiration on the least exertion, were the only indications of declining health. The school was attended to as usual—not an hour was

sacrificed to his weakness; and day succeeded day, and week followed week, without relaxation and without amendment. This could not last. The interregnum between receding health and approaching disease is generally of short duration, and the vacant throne is either greedily seized on by the angel or the demon.

He was getting gradually worse—gradually weaker. He had tried all those little remedies commonly prescribed for coughs, without advantage, and in secret. What was next to be done, he hardly knew. The school could no longer be continued, as he was unable to leave his room. After so much reluctant delay, a medical practitioner was consulted.

On inquiry, it was found that, for some weeks, he had been expectorating blood—he had nocturnal perspirations, hectic flushes, and almost incessant cough. His appetite was gone, and his whole frame in disorder. Poor William said, that he hoped he should soon be better, and able to persevere with his school. A week passed over, and matters were rapidly getting worse; yet it was not without reiterated persuasions, that the pale scholar could be persuaded to return for a season to the home of his fathers.

We must not omit, that, during his confinement, every attention was paid to William by the family of the Allans, and such small luxuries as his state seemed to require were sent by them unsolicited. Mr. Allan himself repeatedly called for him; and, one afternoon, as Miss Mary had walked as far as the village, she summoned up resolution to inquire at the door. William heard her voice, and requested her to come in. As he sat in a large stuffed chair, propped with pillows, his appearance evidently shocked her; and, when she wished to speak to him, her voice swelled in her throat. He extended his hand to her, and told her he would soon be better: but his

long thin fingers thrilled her to the heart by their touch. She stood for a minute beside him ; and, after again shaking hands with him, departed. Her sensations, during her solitary walk home, may be more easily imagined than described.

It was noted by the servants, that Miss Mary happened to be always the first to receive the communications of the messenger sent to the village of Sauchieburn. It was also remarked that the tidings, whether favourable or otherwise, could be read in a countenance not yet hardened by artifice, as so to belie the feelings of the heart.

Home he returned at length. To paint the distress of the family, on that occasion, at such a reappearance of one whom they had loved so tenderly, for whom they had done, and were yet willing to do, so much, were a heartrending and melancholy task. As he entered the door, the mother rushed out to embrace her weak and emaciated son ; and, throwing her arms around his neck, kissed his pale cheek with an agony of distress, while the tears, in spite of opposition, gushed in burning drops over her furrowed cheeks to the ground. The father grasped him by the hand, and supported him, with cheering words, into the apartment which of old he had inhabited. It had been but little used since he had last been its occupant ; and the neat, clean, but plain furniture, remained almost as he had left it.

He was put to bed after the fatigue of travel, and every heart in that house was sorrowful. The poor scholar could not fail to see the distress so visible on his return ; and his heart sank as the clouds of fate lowered over him. His brothers, as they dropped in, one after another, from the fields, approached affectionately to the bedside, and, taking his long, thin fingers in their toil-hardened hands, lamented his case, but cheered him with many a word of comfort, which almost belied themselves, from the uncertain

tone in which they were uttered. And no wonder, for the alteration in his appearance was dreadful; and it was evident, to the least observant glance, that the poor young man was far gone in a consumption.

For some weeks the change of air, and the sight of so many countenances, so anxiously interested in his welfare, seemed to work a favourable change; and the gloom on his spirits began gradually to subside. In the sunny forenoons, a chair was placed for him in the little garden behind the house. The spot commanded an extensive view of the country; and it amused him to look on the jolly reapers in the neighbouring field, and listen to their simple music while gathering in the yellow harvest treasures. Around him were many tall ash-trees, well remembered in the thoughts of other years. The gooseberry bushes, each of which was familiar to his memory, had shed their fruits, and were beginning to shed their leaves; but, on the later currants, some depending red and white strings were yet visible. The summer flowers were disappearing; but the more hardy roots, the spearmint, the gillyflower, the thyme, and the southernwood, sent forth to the autumnal air "a faint decaying smell." The beehive in the corner of the hedgerow was still unremoved, and the buzz of its never idle inhabitants filled the whole air with a continual pleasant murmur. The birds were all singing amid the beauty of nature, and, ever and anon, the lark, springing up on twinkling wings, sent a fainter and yet fainter note from its receding elevation.

So many agreeable images, so much affectionate attention, soothed the wounds that no earthly medicine could heal. In a short time, debility rendered him completely bed-ridden, and the tyrant of the human race betokened his approach "by many a drear foreboding sign."

It was one evening, when all the brothers had dropped

in, one after another, that symptoms of rapid dissolution showed themselves. They sat down in silence around the hearth, and looked frequently, first at William and then at each other; while, at intervals, the fortitude of manhood could not forbear a half stifled sob. They saw that the curtain of death would soon be let down over eyes so beloved; and many a hurried glance of affection—and the agitated countenance—and the quivering hand—seemed to say, in silent eloquence, “Would to God I could die in my brother’s stead!”

William was not insensible to the afflicting scene around him. He told them to bear up, and assured them that he suffered neither pain of body nor mind. “Heaven is wise in all its decrees,” said the dying youth; “mourn not much for me; we shall, I trust, all meet again in Heaven. I only set out on my journey a little while before you. I feel that I have been much, too much of a burden to you all”—

Here he was eagerly interrupted by all of them, who conjured him not to speak in that manner, and that it was almost unkind of him to do so.

“Well,” continued William, “I feel your affection as I ought. The reward hath not perished, and shall not be taken away, though now God calls upon me to leave you.”

He then requested his father to read to him the latter part of the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, which he did with a composed and steady voice, amid the silent tears of his children, and the frequent sobs of the almost heart-broken mother, who leant with her face on the bed-clothes, holding in hers the emaciated hand of her son. The soul of a mother can only comprehend the depth and the agony of her sufferings at that hour, when called on to part with her last born—the Benjamin of her small household.

In a short time his exhaustion was so great, that his efforts to speak were unavailing, and he fell into a gentle slumber, from which he never awoke—breathing his soul out upon the silent midnight without a groan!

However much the stroke of death may be expected, it never arrives without a violent shock to the feelings of all around. Here the grief was deep, but it was not upbraiding; and every pang was tempered by the gentle consolations of Christianity.

The mournful news was communicated to the inhabitants of Sauchieburn; and, amid the regrets of many a grateful parent, bright tears fell from the eyes of childhood, at the thoughts of their kind instructor's death. For a time, with the buoyancy of feeling incident to their years, they had considered the few first day's of play as something favourable and fortunate. Feeling the pleasurable effects, they forgot the melancholy cause. But now the “hope deferred” was taken away, and nothing but uncertainty and doubt were left in its place. They looked on the shut up windows and closed door of the school-house with a mingled feeling of curiosity and regret. The more affectionate said to each other, “our master shall never hear us lessons any more; they are going to lay him in the church-yard; we shall never see him again;” while the more selfish-minded busied themselves with conjectures about him who should come to them in his stead. The sorrows of childhood are of short duration; the heart is then like the softened wax, which takes all impressions—the one obliterates the other, and the last, whatever be its import, is still the deepest.

Not so evanescent was the melancholy at the house of the Allans. The two boys who had been under his charge spoke often of him as their kind master to Miss Mary, who seldom answered them but with a stifled accent, and an involuntary tear in her eye. That, almost unconsciously

to herself, some impression had been made on her heart was evident. The feelings, perhaps, were reciprocal, for William had never mentioned her but in terms of deep respect, mingled with something of tenderness and admiration ; but the wide gulf that separated them prevented him from having, even for a moment, indulged one dearer hope.

Certain it is, from whatever cause it might arise, that the health of Mary Allan declined rapidly, even to a state of the utmost delicacy ; and the cheerful, lively girl, could hardly be recognised in the pale, emaciated, but still beautiful features, over which the ray of pleasure now seldom shot even a transient gleam. But time, the grand physician of all human troubles, by slow, but sure degrees, began the healing of the wound so afflictingly felt by her, and by the whole cottage family. Though, after the first burst of sorrow was over, each turned to his wonted avocation, yet the mainspring of activity was felt to be broken ; and the heart often refuses, for a long period, to mould itself for the reception of new feelings and altered objects. Life assumes a different aspect ; and the thoughts are often tardy to accommodate themselves to change, and its inevitable concomitants.

The remaining brothers met in the cottage of their parents, as heretofore, on the Saturday evenings ; and, for a long time, the blank was felt—a chair was unoccupied—a beloved face was absent ; but resignation to the decrees of Providence at length triumphed over the yearnings of natural affection. The father, on whose temples the few remaining hairs were changed to white, read the portion of Scripture with accustomed gravity, from the “big ha’ Bible ;” and exhibited a lesson, to all around, of noble, steadfast, and unshrinking piety.

The books, the papers, and everything that had belonged to William, were preserved by his relations with an affec-

tionate regard, amounting almost to veneration ; and, in a short time, a plain tombstone was erected at the head of the turf under which his ashes lay, inscribed simply with his name and age.

As the church was at more than two miles' distance from the cottage, the family usually spent the intervals between the forenoon and afternoon services, in loitering about the burial-ground. Around the grave of William, often were the whole remaining family observed, seated in the sunshine, upon the daisied turf, with their open Bibles in their hands.

The health of Miss Allan gradually recovered its former tone ; but the shock she had sustained threw a shadow of change over her whole character. A degree of thoughtfulness and pensive grace hung around her looks and motions, softening down sorrow to resignation, and gaiety to cheerfulness. She grew more passionately fond of the beauties of external nature, and enjoyed a serene pleasure in solitary walks. Sometimes, in the light of the setting sun, when an azure shadow hung over the hills, when the clouds were tipped with resplendent glory, and the note of the blackbird, "most musical, most melancholy," burst on the ear from the neighbouring coppice, the eye of the passenger has, unawares, intruded on the privacy of her grief, as she stood silently gazing on the grave of him who had gone up before her into heaven.

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